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A translation of Roger Ascham's Apologia pro Caena Dominica and contextual analysis.

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PhD Thesis

A translation of Roger Ascham's *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* and contextual analysis.

By Lucy Rachel Nicholas

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Abstract

This thesis comprises a translation and contextual analysis of a sixteenth century Latin tract entitled *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* ('On the Defence of the Lord's Supper') written by Roger Ascham. The tract has never been translated and is scarcely referenced in history writing. It is an important work that has major implications for the existing portrayal of Ascham and, more broadly, the development of Protestantism during the Edwardine Reformation.

In history, Ascham is recognised mainly for his humanist scholarship and classical pedagogy. He is not known for his theological activities, his anticlericalism or his involvement in the religious conflicts of the Reformation. His *Apologia*, which was devoted to an attack on the Mass and the priesthood at a critical time in the religious debates about the Eucharist, problematizes this depiction. A close review of the tract reveals a man fully engaged with, experienced in and committed to the cause of Protestant reform. The work also prompts a necessary reappraisal of the relationship between humanism and theology, both of which operated in parallel and harmony in his campaign for doctrinal change.

The *Apologia*, composed in 1547, the first year of Edward VI's reign, was theologically progressive. Its status as an early manifesto for radical reform helps supplement our understanding of the contested pace and nature of the Reformation at the start of this remarkable reign. Written as a direct response to a series of theological disputations which were held in the University of Cambridge on the issue of the Mass, the *Apologia* provides new evidence for the vital role the University played in the advancement of religious reform. Protestant in outlook, yet at the same time highly independent in approach and subject to a range of influences, this work is also emblematic of the diversity within early Protestantism.

List of Abbreviations and References

Thesis

Ascham's correspondence and works

(E) indicates that the letter was originally composed in English.

(L) indicates that the letter was originally composed in Latin.

G: refers to Giles's edition of Ascham's works in three volumes: *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham*, ed., J.A. Giles (London, 1865). For all correspondence, I provide the date, the volume and letter number and, for longer letters, the page number.

H: refers to Hatch's translation of Ascham's Latin letters: M. Hatch, 'The Ascham Letters: An Annotated Translation of the Latin Correspondence contained in the Giles Edition of Ascham's Works' (Cornell University, PhD thesis, 1948). In each case, I provide the letter number he uses and, if different from the Giles' edition, the date.

V&H: refers to the translation by Vos and Hatch of select letters by Ascham: *The Letters of Roger Ascham*, trans., A.Vos and M.Hatch, ed., A.Vos (New York, 1989).

References to the *Apologia*, *Themata Theologica* or the Oecumenius commentaries are as set out in Roger Ascham, *Theological works* ed., E. Grant (London, 1577/8).

Abbreviations

E.L.H. English Literary History

H.J. Historical Journal

J.E.H. Journal of Ecclesiastical History

J.H.I. Journal of the History of Ideas

ODNB Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

S.C.J. Sixteenth Century Journal

STC A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475-1640, eds., W.A. Jackson, J.F. Ferguson and K.F. Pantzer (second edition, 1986)

Appendix 1: Translation of Ascham's *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*

References in the thesis to page numbers of the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* are to the pages used in the printed version, which was paginated and which I have reproduced.

References to the Great Bible are to the English Bible of 1539-41 available online at <http://www.bibles-online.net> (last accessed Autumn 2013).

References to Erasmus's version of the Bible are to his translation of the New Testament, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527), as arranged in three parallel columns and containing the Greek, his Latin translation, and the Vulgate Latin.

References to Luther's German Bible are to *Biblia, das ist, die gantze Heilige Schrifft Deudsch. Mart. Luth.* (Wittenberg, 1534).

References to Tyndale's Bible (1526-1534) are to the online version at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/sermons-essays-books/william-tyndales-translation> (last accessed Autumn 2013).

References to the Vulgate (New Testament) are to the version as included in Erasmus's (abovementioned) 1527 edition.

References to the Vulgate (Old Testament) are to the Perseus online edition: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection?collection=Perseus%3Acorpus%3Aperseus%2Cauthor%2CVulgate> (last accessed Autumn 2013).

Psalms

(V/GS) The Psalms based on the Vulgate numbering (and based on the translation of the Greek Septuagint).

(H/P) The Psalms based on the Protestant numbering and based on the translation of the Hebrew.

Appendix 2: Grant's Dedication of and Preface to Ascham's *Theological Works*

At the end of the dedication and preface of this printed version of Ascham's theological works was a list of *errata*. I have not reproduced this, but incorporated each into my translation and explained them in footnotes where appropriate.

Introduction

If someone were to read the available literature concerning Roger Ascham, even in some depth, they would be forgiven for thinking that Ascham had little, or no, interest or involvement in religion, much less the business of theological reform. This researcher would certainly read about Ascham's contributions to English prose, for instance, his *Scholemaster* and *Toxophilus*, both written in the vernacular and impressive for their elegance and fluency. His investigations would also uncover Ascham's dedication to the cause of education, his years of royal service as tutor to Elizabeth I, and his didactic writing on the best ways to teach and learn Latin. It is, however, unlikely that the researcher would come across Ascham's theological works, except perhaps in a footnote. It is less likely he would read them, written as they are in Latin, never translated into English, and only published once in 1577/8 without any further editions. In the history of the Reformation, Ascham's theological projects have been almost completely ignored.

Ascham's *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*, his *Themata Theologica*, and his translations of Oecumenius's commentaries on the Pauline epistles to Philemon and Titus have been unjustly neglected.¹ The purpose of this thesis is to draw particular attention to one of them, the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* ('Defence of the Lord's Supper'), an anti-Mass tract composed in 1547, the full text and translation of which is set out in appendix 1. It was published posthumously in a printed volume in 1577/8 by Edward Grant; in appendix 2, I provide a translation of Grant's dedication and preface to this printed work. Ascham's *Apologia* is an interesting and important work for several reasons. To start with, it brings to the fore a new and different dimension of Ascham's life. In historical accounts, Ascham is invariably associated with secular activities or the sphere of humanism. His *Apologia*, by contrast, connects him to a different remit, that of theology and the cut and thrust of religious reform. But the value of this tract extends beyond a reappraisal of Ascham himself; it also prompts a fresh consideration of various aspects of the broader Reformation. His Eucharist work can be located within several specific Reformation settings, ranging from the national

¹ The full titles of these works are: *Apologia pro caena dominica contra missam & eius praestigias* ('A Defence of the Lord's Supper against the Mass and its Magic'); *Themata Quaedam Theologica* ('Certain Theological Topics'); and *Expositiones antiquae in epistolas Divi Pauli ad Titum, et Philemonem, ex diversis sanctorum Patrum Graece scriptis commentariis, ab Oecumenio collectae, & Cantabrigiae Latine versae* ('Ancient Expositions on the letters of St Paul to Titus and Philemon from the diverse commentaries of Holy Fathers written in Greek, collected by Oecumenius and turned into Latin at Cambridge'). These were all printed and bound in the same volume and published in 1577/8 by Edward Grant.

backdrop of Edward's reign to the academic centre of Cambridge University and St. John's College and, on account of its publication date, the Elizabethan religious settlement. It also intersects with several 'types of reformation' that have been identified in Reformation scholarship: the confessional, the intellectual - including the theological role of humanism - the international and the social.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first comprises a full review of Ascham's life within a strictly theological and religious framework. It highlights the number and range of theological projects he undertook over a period of years, projects as confident as they were ambitious. It also puts considerably greater emphasis on his commitment to religious reform, beginning with his early protests against the Pope and following through the development of a more coherent set of doctrinal and confessional positions which utilized elements of both Lutheran and Reformed positions. His three year ambassadorial posting to Germany opened up further religious possibilities and networks and fully confirmed him to be a Protestant. Like many reformers, he submitted to and survived Mary's reign but in such a way that did not entail compromising his faith. Religion and its reform were of paramount importance in all he did and wrote and, although he would not take holy orders, he appears to have been a deeply spiritual man always questing after the truth in God's Word.

The second chapter surveys more precisely the circumstances and genesis of Ascham's *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*. The tract was composed as a direct response to a series of religious disputations held during the first year of Edward VI's reign at Cambridge University on the subject of the Eucharist. These disputations, in which Ascham played a central role, not only attracted considerable controversy within the University, but were eventually stopped on the orders of Edward's government. In spite of this, Ascham composed the *Apologia*, a work which was quite clear about which side of the debates it supported: it was an assertive and bitter rejection of the Mass which targeted, in particular, the doctrine of sacrifice and the sacerdotal priesthood. Within the context of the Edwardine Reformation generally, the *Apologia*, composed as it was at the end of 1547, belonged to the very first wave of tracts produced during the early years of Edward's reign. Although Ascham's tract was not published, as many others were, evidence suggests that he did not intend to keep it a private matter; he aired its contents with men at the very top of government. Ascham's *Apologia* helps augment our appreciation of the spasmodic nature of reform in that first critical period of the Edwardine Reformation. It also raises some

interesting questions about the identity of those dictating the pace in those initial stages, the government often preferring to err on the side of caution in its approach to the Eucharist. The tract's publication by Edward Grant in 1577/8 warrants further and separate analysis, and I consider the extent to which Ascham's attack on the Mass remained relevant in the ongoing campaign for reform under Elizabeth. Finally in this chapter I corroborate Ascham's authorship and the dating of the tract.

In the remaining three chapters I consider, in closer detail, the *Apologia* itself. Chapter 3 analyses the tract's theological dimensions and considers the urgency and force of its message about the need for sacramental reform. The *Apologia* was not the work of a theological novice. On display was the Scriptural exegesis of an expert, much deft negotiation of theological concepts, language and its formulation, and high levels of patristic familiarity. Ascham also exhibited a full grasp of several important Reformation debates, both historic and international, which he capably channelled into his theological framework. The strong Lutheran flavour of his work at times is interesting and prompts a review of the some common assumptions about the role of Luther in the Edwardine Reformation, for there was nothing moderate about Ascham's stance. Yet, at the same time, Ascham's commitment to *sola scriptura* was buttressed by his linguistic skills, especially his proficiency in Greek, and his training in languages gave rise to an independence of approach and thought resulting in some markedly idiosyncratic theological conclusions.

In acknowledgement of its central importance within the work, chapter 4 focuses on one particular aspect of the tract, Ascham's anticlericalism. His *Apologia* targeted in a systematic and sustained way the Catholic priesthood. Whilst there were obvious theological grounds for doing this, Ascham's condemnation of priests went beyond a denigration of their performance of the Mass sacrifice. He mercilessly parodied them, attacked their morals and learning, and used Scriptural philology to challenge the very existence of the office of priesthood itself. His anticlericalism even seemed to give definition to a sense of nationalism that underpinned his case against the Mass. On closer examination, the anticlericalism that permeated the *Apologia* was a feature in Ascham's life more generally (as chapter 1 also explores). There were a number of social reasons for an aversion towards the clergy including his legal background, lay status, and his financial circumstances. All of these fed into his theological argumentation against the Mass, and must be factored into our historical understanding of the nature and process of confessionalization.

In chapter 5, I return to what Ascham is arguably better known for – his humanism. However, rather than treat humanism as a separate topic, my aim is to show just how integrated into theological process his humanism was. As I initially outline in chapter 1, Ascham was one of the leading lights in the pursuit of the *studia humanitatis* at Cambridge. His proficiency in Latin and Greek, his knowledge of classical literature and ancient history, and his appreciation of rhetoric were unimpeachable. He regarded these skills not as mere tools or adjuncts but as inherently religious and as providential gifts from God. They were fully woven into his Eucharistic work, informing his theological reasoning and, at the same time, shaping and enriching it. An argument for a complete union between humanism and theology is not unproblematic and I address various approaches both in the sixteenth century and in modern historiography. Ascham's humanist theology also merits comparison with that of other reformed thinkers on the continent who successfully and harmoniously married the two.

Ascham's *Apologia* is a tract which deserves to be better known in early modern historical scholarship. It is a work that provides not just another contemporary viewpoint about the Eucharist but a Reformation story in all its personal, social, religious and political colours.

Terminology

Issues of terminology have been discussed by a number of historians. Debates centre, in the main, on the application of the stark terms 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' which tend to give an overly teleological impression of a schismatic *fait accompli*. At the time Ascham wrote his *Apologia*, the Reformation was still unfolding, and there still existed considerable fluidity in the development of doctrinal positions and confessional allegiances. In acknowledgment of this, less definitive labels have been suggested as being more appropriate for the period up to 1553. MacCulloch prefers the terms 'traditionalist' or 'conservative' and 'evangelical', pointing out that the term 'Protestant', for example, did not become 'naturalized' in England until at least after Mary's reign.² Marshall's survey of confessional labels highlights to an even greater degree the lack of stability in the contemporary usage of these terms, observing that 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' only really came to be meaningfully applied much later still.³ Yet, Ascham regularly used, during Edward VI's reign and beyond, the term 'Protestant'

² D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: a Life* (New Haven and London, 1996), pp.2-3.

³ P. Marshall, 'The Naming of Protestant England', *Past and Present* 214, 1 (2012), pp.87-128.

about himself and others.⁴ And indeed, other historians make a convincing case for its justifiable application in the earlier Reformation. Ryrie argues that at least from the 1540s the essentials of what would blossom into Protestantism were present in early evangelicalism.⁵ Davies uses the term ‘Protestantism’ throughout her review of Edward’s reign, arguing that, for the first time, Protestants were part of the establishment and not part of a group in opposition.⁶ In my thesis, I use both ‘evangelical’ and ‘Protestant’, though I tend to reserve the former for the reform movement of Henry’s reign and the latter for Edward’s reign, as a way of designating the difference between frustrated aspiration and the real hope of fulfilment respectively. This is not, however, to deny that, at the same time, there remained a considerable degree of flux, especially in the development of doctrinal issues such as the Eucharistic presence. By the same token, as regards those on the opposite side of the spectrum, ‘conservative’ seems more appropriate than ‘Catholic’ prior to Mary’s reign, except where the latter is actually used by Ascham or contemporaries before that time. When referring to the broader European Reformations of the same period, the more straightforward labels of ‘Catholic’ and ‘Protestant’ are preferable, not least because many of these Reformations were played out earlier than in England. I also use ‘Catholic’ to denote pre-Reformation religion. Wherever Ascham’s doctrinal outlook appears to be in line with a particular theological school of thought, such as ‘Lutheran’ and ‘Reformed’, I use that term. Such labels are useful up to a point but are not intended to classify Ascham within any particular reform tradition. That would be anachronistic and would obscure the fact that, whilst receptive to a range of influences, Ascham was a highly individual theological thinker. In certain places, I also apply the adjective ‘radical’ to Ascham and others. Again, I do not intend that it should be understood as an absolute term (and I avoid the noun ‘a radical’) but, at the start of Edward’s reign, it is helpful to draw comparisons between different Protestant outlooks.

⁴ See chapter 3.

⁵ A. Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013), pp.6- 9 and 470.

⁶ C. Davies, *A Religion of the Word: the defence of the Reformation in the reign of Edward VI* (Manchester, 2002), p.xx.

Chapter 1: Re-contextualizing Ascham

Roger Ascham is by no means an obscure figure. His works in the vernacular have long been studied, in particular, his *Toxophilus* on archery, the *Scholemaster*, a manual on Latin pedagogy, and his extensive correspondence. However, with analysis tending to focus on his stylistic expertise in these individual works, he has become rather better known among English literary scholars than historians of the Reformation.¹ When it does come to historiography, particular roles, such as his brief time as tutor to Elizabeth, have come to define and confine him within a narrow historical remit of educational humanism.² Holistic studies of Ascham are relatively rare and there exists only one modern biography (generally deemed to be the official one) by Lawrence Ryan, published in 1963.³ Although an extremely useful guide to the various stages of Ascham's life, this conveys a man primarily concerned with secular scholarship, depicting him, in essence, as a classical humanist who couldn't quite cope with the real world.⁴ Ascham's theological works such as his *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* have been practically ignored and no attempt has been made to cast him as a religious figure, let alone as a serious Protestant reformer.

¹ For example: G.P. Krapp, *The Rise of English Literary Prose* (New York, 1915), pp.292-299; A. Vos 'The Formation of Ascham's Prose Style' *Studies in Philology* 71 (1974), pp.344-70 and 'Form and Function in Roger Ascham's Prose Style', *Philological Quarterly* 55 (July 1976), pp.5-18; O.B. Hardison (ed.), *English Literary Criticism: The Renaissance* (London, 1967); M.H. Loughlin, S. Bell, and P. Brace (eds.), *The Broadview Anthology of Sixteenth Century Poetry and Prose* (Peterborough, 2012), pp.332-338; P.E. Medine 'The Art and Wit of Roger Ascham's Bid for Royal Patronage: *Toxophilus* 1545' in P.E. Medine and J. Wittreich (eds.), *Soundings of things done: essays in early modern literature in honour of S.K. Heninger, Jr.* (Newark and London, 1997).

² J.K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965); M. Hattaway, *A New Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2010) p.101.

³ Ryan, *Roger Ascham* (Stanford and Oxford, 1963). There are a number of earlier biographies of Ascham, the earliest being the *Oratio de Vita & Obitu* by Grant in 1576 which was included in an edition of Ascham's letters in 1576 (*Disertissimi viri Rogeri Aschami ... Familiarium epistolarum libri tres*) and is also included in volume 3 of Giles' edition of Ascham's works (see below); a translation of it can be found at www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aschamlife/trans.html (last accessed Autumn 2013) and further references to Grant's *Vita* are to this. Samuel Johnson's *Life of Ascham* was appended to J. Bennet (ed.), *The English Works of Roger Ascham*, 1761 (also printed in *Early Biographical Writings of Johnson*, ed. J.D. Fleeman (Farnborough, 1973). Rev. Dr. J.A. Giles wrote a life of Ascham to accompany his publication of *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham* (London, 1865), as set out in vol.1 therein. There is a biography in German, Katterfeld's *Roger Ascham: Sein Leben und seine Werke* ('Ascham's Life and Works') (Strasbourg, 1879). Another later and helpful review of parts of Ascham's life can be found in the introduction of *Letters of Roger Ascham translated by Hatch and Vos*, ed. A. Vos (New York, 1989). Also of note is a one page summary of Ascham's life, probably written by White Kennett (bishop, antiquarian and a great campaigner against popery, 1660-1728), set out in an unidentified manuscript held in the British Library (Lansdowne MS 981/41 fol.68); it is interesting to observe how this summary places more emphasis than most biographies on Ascham's religious and theological activities, such as his involvement in the Mass disputations (which I discuss in chapter 2).

⁴ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.1-7 and *passim*.

Before reviewing the *Apologia* more closely, this thesis will re-evaluate his life generally, drawing attention to the religious settings within which he operated, his profoundly theological inclinations, and his progressive, sometimes riskily radical, outlook. It will argue that Ascham was a man quite willing to intervene in theological affairs and had considerable potential influence in this sphere. A pronounced anticlericalism fed directly into his theological approach and one can trace a continuum of prejudice against the Catholic priesthood that manifested itself at various points in his life. His humanism and commitment to classical studies, both of which were also an important dimension of his *Apologia*, remain important, but must be assessed afresh and re-contextualised within a wholly religious framework. Unless all these aspects are fully grasped, the real Ascham and the true status and function of the *Apologia* will elude us.

1.1 Religious Settings and Theological Activities

In 1530, at the age of fifteen, Ascham became a member of St John's College in Cambridge. Boy and man, student and fellow, he would study and teach here for the vast majority of his life, remaining a fellow until 1554. Historical treatments of St John's College usually focus on its efforts in the promotion of Renaissance learning.⁵ Whilst this was of high importance, fundamentally, St John's was as much religious community as academic institution. The founding statutes of the college prescribed *Dei cultus, morum probitas et Christianae fidei corroboratio*, 'A worship of God, a probity of manners and the corroboration of the Christian faith'.⁶ St John's College was, in fact, a school of practical theology and one of the overriding reasons for its establishment had been the improvement of the clergy. Its founder was John Fisher, a doctor of theology, ordained priest and Bishop of Rochester, and there was an underlying assumption that all students passing through its precincts would eventually take holy orders.⁷ All fellows from whatever discipline were expected to take a vow of celibacy.⁸

⁵ For example, McConica, *Humanists*, p.80; and P. Linehan (ed.), *St John's College, Cambridge: a history*, (Woodbridge, 2011), p.xiii and p.19.

⁶ J.E.B. Mayor, *Early Statutes of the College of St John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1859), p.xxi.

⁷ Mayor, *Statutes*, for details of the college statutes through the years. Statutes, of course, were not the whole story, and Morgan observes that in the sixteenth century there were a number of laymen who, in addition to studying at the University, came to enjoy themselves and would often leave without taking a degree (Morgan, *A History of the University Cambridge 1546-1750* (Cambridge, 2004), p.25). On the whole, however, even after the upheavals of the Reformation, Cambridge remained a largely religious institution where many or most of its undergraduates prepared to join the Church (M.E. Devine and C. Summerfield (eds.), *International Dictionary of University Histories* (Oxford and New York, 2013)), p.447. See also E. Miller, *Portrait of a College. A History of the College of Saint John the Evangelist, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1961) pp.10-11; and McConica, *Humanists*, p.79.

⁸ R.B. Outhwaite, *Clandestine Marriage in England, 1500-1850* (London, 1995), p.3.

A high emphasis was placed on preaching and theological disputation, both of which were esteemed for their religiously transformative effects and their ability to produce a more competent clerical body.⁹ The regime for students and staff alike was almost monastic: each day would begin with hearing Mass, studies would start immediately after, often at six in the morning, chapel attendance was frequent and compulsory, and preachers would declaim the works of the Christian Fathers during meal times.¹⁰ Master, fellows and scholars all wore clerical dress.¹¹ Nor was this discipline abandoned after the demise of Fisher: Henrician statutes for the college issued in 1545 likewise stipulated that theology was the goal to which all other studies led and reinforced requirements about preaching and the taking of holy orders.¹² Grant, in his biography of Ascham, wrote that the college ‘surpassed all the world’s academic institutions in its number of learned theologians’.¹³ An education at St John’s was essentially a training ground for a life with God and a key means to facilitate internal reform of the Church.

Ascham’s BA, MA and subsequent research at the college were in the arts and he did not take holy orders.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he would have been unavoidably and constantly involved in theological activities throughout his time at St John’s. As a non-preaching fellow, Ascham was required, in accordance with college statutes, to engage in certain religious duties, be it leading disputations or producing written interpretations of Scripture.¹⁵ We know, for example, that in 1547 he was in charge of the college disputations about the Eucharist.¹⁶ It is

⁹ M. Underwood, ‘John Fisher and the promotion of learning’ in B. Bradshaw and E. Duffy (eds.), *Humanism, reform and the Reformation: the career of Bishop John Fisher* (Cambridge 1989), pp.28-29 and 31; R. Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher*, (Cambridge, 1991), p.30.

¹⁰ S. Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (Yale, 2008), p.16; D.M. Loades, *The Cecils: privilege and power behind the throne* (Kew, 2007), p.20.

¹¹ Mayor, *Statutes*, p.134.

¹² Mayor, *Statutes*, pp.51, 111 and 125. Judging by the college Henry VIII himself founded in 1546, we can conclude that he was serious in his aims in this respect: Trinity College was very theological in its orientation, divinity the academic focus and it was, at least for the rest of the sixteenth century, ‘a college of divines’ (P.Gaskell, *Trinity College Library: The first 150 years* (Cambridge, 1980), pp.22-23).

¹³ Grant, *Vita*, para.8.

¹⁴ A typical Cambridge undergraduate in the sixteenth century took their BA and MA in the Faculty of Arts and would then move to superior Faculties of Theology, Medicine or Law, or remain, like Ascham, in the Faculty of Arts: D.R. Leader, *History of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1988), p.89. The BA and MA arts courses were traditionally made up of the seven liberal arts: the *trivium* - grammar, rhetoric and logic and the *quadrivium* - arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy, and the three philosophies (moral, natural and metaphysical) though the *trivium* provided the core: E. Leedham-Green, *A Concise History of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1996), p.17. In the sixteenth century, the *studia humanitatis*, made up of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy, absorbed and superseded the *trivium* and *quadrivium*. See also: L. Jardine, ‘Humanism in the Sixteenth Century Cambridge Arts Course’, *History of Education* 1, 4 (1975), pp.16-32; and L. Jardine and A. Grafton, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Europe* (Cambridge, 1986).

¹⁵ Underwood, ‘John Fisher and promotion of learning’, p.31.

¹⁶ See chapter 2.

very likely too that he was sometimes required to lead college prayers; Katterfeld mentioned having seen at St John's an evening prayer composed by Ascham.¹⁷ The fact that when Ascham got married in 1554, he had to resign his fellowship, his Greek readership and his post as Public Orator of the University, is suggestive of the way these positions were considered to be effectively ecclesiastical in nature.¹⁸

Whilst at the college, Ascham also embarked on a range of specific theological projects. The Psalms, in particular, appear to have attracted him. In 1538 he undertook an edition of the Psalms, though this is not now extant,¹⁹ and in the following year offered his assistance in the Bishop of Chichester's project of arranging the Psalms.²⁰ In 1542, again to the Bishop of Chichester, he offered a 'Psalm against the Turk' metaphrased into Latin senarian verse.²¹ Further interest in the Psalms was evident in 1553 when he presented Stephen Gardiner with a book that rendered the Psalms of David into Greek verse (probably by Nonnus, an obscure second century author).²² As Zim shows, an interest in the Psalms was no innocuous academic frolic. Rather, it located Ascham very much within a general preference at this time for a return to the Hebrew Bible and, in particular, the moral and religious instruction of the Psalms.²³ He was also participating in a literary-Biblical vogue for metrical Psalm versions, which, according to Hamlin, played an essential role in the spread of Reformation ideas.²⁴

A few years into his fellowship, Ascham embarked on what was, by the standards of the day, a theologically challenging and pioneering project. He produced a Latin translation of the Greek commentaries of Oecumenius, a tenth century Thessalian bishop, on the Pauline Epistles to Titus and Philemon. This entailed translating large extracts of the Epistles themselves but also Oecumenius's collated insights into Paul's meaning and message. This

¹⁷ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.325. The volume has since disappeared from the college.

¹⁸ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.206.

¹⁹ G. Noyes, 'A Study of Roger Ascham's Literary Citations with Particular Reference to his Knowledge of the Classics' (Yale, PhD thesis, 1937), p.105.

²⁰ Ascham's letter to 'a friend' (L) G:vol.1,17, 1543/ H:6, 1539; in his footnotes to this letter, Hatch observes the then bishop was probably Richard Sampson rather than George Day.

²¹ (L) G:vol.1,136, 1552/H:15, 1542. A 'Psalm against the Turk' could be a reference to Psalm 28; Erasmus had produced a commentary on Psalm 28 in 1530 under the title 'Most useful advice on the war against the Turks': E. Rummel, 'Textual and Hermeneutic work of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam' in M. Saebo (ed.), *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation* (Gottingen, 1996). Senarian verse is a form of metre, often used in the genre of tragedy and made up of six feet (usually the iambus).

²² Ascham's letter to Gardiner (L) G:vol.1, 159/H:150, 1553.

²³ R. Zim, *English Metrical Psalms: Poetry as Praise and Prayer, 1535-1601* (Cambridge, 1987), pp.1-3.

²⁴ Zim, *Psalms*, p.4; H. Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge, 2004), p.1.

was no regular theological project. The *editio princeps* of Oecumenius had appeared in Verona only in 1532, and Ascham would have had to have worked hard to get hold of it.²⁵ As has been observed, sixteenth century translations, especially those involving Greek *editiones principes*, were inextricably implicated in the controversies of the Reformation and broader confessional efforts to authenticate Church doctrine.²⁶ Oecumenius's commentaries also drew on a range of Greek Church Fathers, including Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, Gregory, Basil and Photius, figures who were, at that point in the sixteenth century, only just beginning to be properly studied. Of these, the main authority Oecumenius drew on was Chrysostom, and this Greek Father's interpretation of Pauline doctrine may well have constituted one of the main attractions for Ascham in undertaking this project. At the time, a taste for Chrysostom had begun to assert itself among certain quarters in Cambridge; John Cheke, contemporary of Ascham at St John's and first Regius Professor of Greek, would dedicate in 1543 a translation of two of Chrysostom's homilies to Henry VIII, a gesture which quite clearly points to the novelty of reading the Greek Fathers at this time.²⁷ Ascham deliberately advertised his project, first forwarding his work (on Philemon) to John Seton, fellow St John's, ordained priest and chaplain to Fisher, and subsequently dedicating his translations (of Titus) to two of the most senior religious figures in the land – the Bishop of Ely, Thomas Goodrich, and the Archbishop of York, Edward Lee.²⁸ Continued interest in the Fathers can be seen in the books Ascham requested to borrow, including Chrysostom in Greek from Cheke in 1543 and Gregory of Nyssa (a Cappadocian Father) from John Ponet in 1545.²⁹

There were further theological endeavours, both aspirational and actual. In 1543 he volunteered his services to John Redman in transcribing a book which Redman had offered to his Majesty; this was almost certainly Redman's *De Justificatione*, a treatise on the nature of justification.³⁰ In 1544 Ascham wrote to 'a friend' within the archbishopric of York, offering

²⁵ There exists no record of how he went about this.

²⁶ F. Schurink (ed.), *Tudor Translation* (New York, 2011), pp.11 and 80.

²⁷ Cheke's *D. Ioannis Chrysostomi homiliae duae nunc primum in lucem aeditae* (London, 1543). This work may have had a role in securing Cheke's appointment a year later in 1544 as tutor to the prince Edward.

²⁸ Letter to Seton (L) G:vol.1, 11/H:12, 1542, also held in manuscript form at St John's College in MS L.3 (James, 360). Ascham's dedication to Lee was alluded to in the above letter to Seton and it is also clear the work was sent to Lee from letters (L) H:10, 1541/2 and (L) G:vol.1, 13/H:13, 1542. The dedication to Goodrich was contained in a manuscript letter not included in editions by Giles or Hatch, nor, to my knowledge, translated; it is held at the Bodleian Library as Rawlinson MS D.1317.

²⁹ (L) G:vol.1, 28/H:31; and (L) G:vol.1, 21/H:24, respectively.

³⁰ Ascham's letter to Redman (L) G:vol.1, 20, p.46/H:23, 1543. It is unclear whether anything came of this, however, it was certainly the case that within a few years, Ascham and Redman had disagreed about the

to produce a preface to Lee's work on the Pentateuch.³¹ Though this did not come to fruition, he did, at the same time, start on another written theological work of his own, namely his *Themata Theologica* ('Theological Themes').³² These mainly comprised commentaries on Scriptural verses (both Old and New Testament) but also included explanations of difficult theological concepts such as the Augustinian propositions about sin constituting not the act but the intention, and the notion of the *felix culpa* (literally, 'happy fault'). Though made up of eleven separate sections, two central themes that ran through the entire work were Christology and Scriptural authority. Ryan is unfairly casual about this work, stating that it 'smacks of a school copy book' and that 'it is not one of his more important works'.³³ On the contrary, the work revealed much about Ascham's development as a Protestant (as discussed in 1.2 of this chapter). As Grant avers in his preface to this work, it is probable that the *Themata* were, in a large part, the product of religious disputations that Ascham had taken part in within the college by reason of 'the obligations of office'.³⁴

Another valuable piece of evidence for Ascham's sustained theological involvement and patristic enthusiasm was his annotated copy of one of the major Fathers of the Church, St Ambrose's treatise on election and justification (*De Vocatione*).³⁵ It is difficult to infer with any certainty precise doctrinal positions from Ascham's jottings and underlings, but we can at least identify a marked interest in several important theological themes and make limited conjectures about his leanings. The issue of the will was clearly of significance. Ascham's marginalia identified different categories of will (*voluntas*): he used Ambrose, for example, to divide the will into: *sensualis, animalis and spiritalis* ('physical feeling, animal and spiritual').³⁶ He seemed also to be interested in establishing a definition of the will, on the same page underlining [*inest voluntas*] *qua aut appetitur quod placet, aut declinatur quod displicet* ('[in it the will] through which one aims for what one likes and veers from what

doctrine: in a letter of 1551 from Ascham to Sturm, he wrote that 'Redman has differed somewhat from us in justification by faith alone...not because he has doubted the truth of that doctrine, as because he feared the licentiousness...' (L) G:vol.1, 126/V&H:43, 1551.

³¹ (L) G:vol.1, 24/H: 27.

³² Like Ascham's *Apologia*, the *Themata* have never before been translated; all translated quotations from the work in this thesis are mine. Ryan considers that parts of the *Themata* may have been reworked at the time of the *Apologia* (Ascham, p.99).

³³ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.99-100.

³⁴ See appendix 2. References to disputations within the *Themata* itself further support this (pp.174, 176, 177 and 229).

³⁵ Ascham's annotations to *Divi Ambrosii ... de vocatione omnium gentium libri duo* (Geneva, 1541), a printed work held at the Bodleian Library (8° Rawlinson, 169 (2). On the title page is written *manus haec est Rogeri Aschami* 1555; it is therefore likely that his annotations belong to that date. There has been very little discussion of these annotations since Ryan's initial discovery of them.

³⁶ Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, p.6.

displeases') and in the adjacent margin writing *Voluntas*.³⁷ It is possible that he agreed with Ambrose's view that there was a considerable degree of harmony between the doctrine of God's grace and free will, but his annotations and underlinings did not simply denote acquiescence, but seemed to reflect his own convictions. He stressed what Ambrose did not, namely that, of the two, God's grace triumphed: in multiple places, he inscribed the words *gratia Dei*, he very clearly penned at the top of one page *vita aeterna non est merces operum sed gratia domini* ('the eternal life is not the profit/earning of deeds, but [by] the grace of God'), and underlined Ambrose's *Deus qui operatur omnia in omnibus* ('God who effects everything in everything/everyone').³⁸ Ascham also appears to have used the Ambrose tract as an opportunity to consider more fully the doctrine of predestination. Ascham's extensive markings in a passage where Ambrose discussed the *universitas electorum specialis* (a special (as opposed to general) body of the elect) and his repeated margin note *impiorum universitas* (body of the wicked) also revealed a man grappling with the permutations of this difficult doctrine.³⁹ It seems evident that he broadly accepted the idea of predestination (probably double predestination) with the proviso that this did not negate the importance of living a godly life.⁴⁰

That Ascham understood himself to be active in theology was reflected in those he sought patronage from. He was selective and targeted the most learned and senior clerical figures, a number of whom, relative to the time, were broadly supportive of religious reformation. In 1541 he wrote to Bishop of Llandaff, Robert Holgate, proposing that he be of service.⁴¹ Holgate had, during his time at Cambridge during the 1530s (and therefore overlapping with Ascham), 'gravitated towards the emerging evangelical grouping in Cambridge'.⁴² In the same year of 1541, Ascham was successful in securing Edward Lee, the Archbishop of York, as a patron (one of the dedicatees of his Oecumenius letter to Titus translation). Although Lee was doctrinally conservative, he had nonetheless given his public support to the royal supremacy and was openly anti-papal.⁴³ Ascham surely too admired him for his skills in

³⁷ Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, p.6.

³⁸ Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, pp.45, 67 and 72.

³⁹ Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, pp.23 and 24. I dispute Ryan's remarks about Ascham's rejection of predestination on the basis of his annotations on this tract (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.212).

⁴⁰ At p.82, Ascham wrote in the margin *electio de libero arbitrio superba* ('arrogant election about free will'), an annotation which surely underscored the need for taking responsibility of one's actions within a framework of election.

⁴¹ (L) G:vol.1, 10/H:11.

⁴² ODNB for Holgate.

⁴³ ODNB for Lee.

Latin and Greek which were well known following his earlier collaboration with Erasmus on the revision of the New Testament. After Lee's death in September 1544, Ascham once again looked for patronage, writing to, *inter alia*, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester.⁴⁴ It is perhaps no coincidence that all these men were alumni of Cambridge and Ascham felt that he could also try to take advantage of such a tie. However, his predilection for working for and with men of the cloth was a recurring one: in 1553 at the start of Mary's reign, he would ask the Secretary of State, Sir William Petre, to secure him a place with, for example, the Dean of St Paul's or Westminster, and also obtained Reginald Pole, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, as a patron.⁴⁵

There is also no doubt that Ascham was a deeply religious man. Some of his letters dating from the early 1540s seem to contain such personal expressions of religious calling that one historian has conjectured that they represent his intentions to take holy orders.⁴⁶ For example, in a fragment of a letter to Lee of 1541-2, Ascham states (somewhat elliptically but portentously) that he had 'forsaken Egypt' and was 'destined to the study of Scriptures'.⁴⁷ Writing to Cheke in 1544, Ascham repeated his father's dying instructions: 'to turn to some worthy manner of living', asking 'was not this wisdom for me about Christ and the things pertaining to Christ at the very moment when his soul would shortly ascend to Christ?'⁴⁸ Though, in the end, Ascham would never take orders, they would have constituted a natural path to follow: his younger brother Anthony, who also attended St John's, would be ordained a deacon and was granted two ecclesiastical livings under Edward VI.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Ascham letter to Cranmer (L) G:vol.1, 27/H:30, 1545; concerning Gardiner's patronage, relevant letters are those: to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 23/H:26 and to Seton (L) G:vol.1, 25/H:28, both of 1544; and to Gardiner himself (L) G:vol.1, 34/H:34, 1545. The latter had, in the early stages of the Reformation, evinced some distinctly evangelical sympathies: D. MacCulloch, 'Two Dons in Politics: Thomas Cranmer and Stephen Gardiner 1503-1533', *H.J.*, 37, 1 (1994), pp.1-22.

⁴⁵ Ascham's letter to Petre (E) G:vol.1, 163, 1553 and Ryan, *Ascham*, p.207. At the time Ascham wrote this letter (December 1553), the Dean of St Paul's was William May, a Cambridge-trained man who had been actively engaged in enforcing Edward's reforms (ODNB). Newly appointed in 1553 as Dean of Westminster was Hugh Weston, Oxford-educated but a known conservative; it is therefore likely that Ascham had in mind his predecessor, Richard Cox, a fellow Cantabrigdian, active promoter of religious reform, and educator (ODNB). Petre himself had been a senior member of Edward VI's administration (ODNB). See below for further details about Ascham's relationship with Pole.

⁴⁶ Hatch note to letter H:10.

⁴⁷ (L) H:10.

⁴⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 21/H:24.

⁴⁹ ODNB for Anthony Ascham. There is no evidence as to whether his older brother Thomas, who also passed through St John's, took orders.

Ascham may not have taken orders, but he was very serious about Scripture. He had his own personal copy of a Greek New Testament which contained a preface by Johannes Oecolampadius who had been an editorial assistant to Erasmus.⁵⁰ Judging by his marginalia, it appears that Ascham was genuinely moved by the experience of reading the actual words of the Bible. At one point, he wrote in capital letters at the top of a page the words *ho pneuma theos* ('the breath of God'). He evidently appreciated the act of engaging with the text itself, highlighting, as Erasmus had done, the word *logos* at the start of John's Gospel. He also marked-up the Greek word *euangelion* ('good news' or 'Gospel') in several places and his Greek annotation in St Matthew's Gospel, *euangelion autos gar sōsei ton laon autou apo tōn hamartiōn autōn* ('The Gospel - He himself saves his people from their own sins') suggested he viewed the Word of God as a source of salvation. It was also evident from the several cross references he made in the margins to other sections of the Bible that he was familiar with its detail and could make connections between its parts. His annotations furthermore pointed to his confidence in Biblical exegesis: at one point, he amended the original Greek of Matthew's Gospel (7:13) by changing the location of a comma in the following verse: *hoti plateia hē pulē euruchōros hē hodos hē apagousa eis tēn apōleian* ('for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction'). Ascham moved it from after *pulē* to after *euruchōros*.⁵¹ There is no doubt that Ascham had a genuine connection with the Bible, its wording and phraseology. Indeed, there is one theory about Ascham's style which suggests that Ascham's prose owes as least as much to Paul's Epistles as to Cicero, an observation which reflects well Ascham's deep and long-term immersion in the New Testament.⁵²

1.2 Protestant Reformer

⁵⁰ New Testament in Greek (Basel, 1531), held in the archives of Hatfield House (archive number 7522). It contains Ascham's manuscript initials, but there is no date to indicate at what stage in his life he owned it. As regards Ascham's ownership of books more generally, he certainly had a personal library; in an early draft of the *Scholemaster*, Ascham referred to his 'own poor library' (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.303). We also know that Robert Pember, his first tutor at St John's, left his extensive Greek library to Ascham in his will (ODNB for Pember). However, Ascham's library has not survived intact, nor do we have a full inventory for it. Editions of texts owned by him can be found in various modern collections, for example, in Westminster School Archives, Hatfield House, and the Bodleian Library. Evidence suggests that a high number of books were also loaned between friends (with warranties sometimes being given).

⁵¹ Although it would be better placed where it was, one can quite see why Ascham might have thought that two adjectives should qualify the 'gate' since the clause just before this referred only to a gate, not also to a way; the wording at the start of 7:13 was 'Entre in at the strayte gate, for wyde is the gate and broade is the waye that leadeth to destruccyon....' (as per Great Bible).

⁵² J. Mueller, *The Native Tongue and the Word: Developments in English Prose Style* (Chicago, 1984), pp.322-46.

There has been no systematic exploration of Ascham's confessional position. Depending on the sources used, one can encounter several different classifications, ranging from 'a relatively conservative Protestant', 'supporting cautious religious reform', to 'a learned and grave Protestant', 'of Reformist outlook' and even 'a Puritan'.⁵³ These have been applied in a piecemeal fashion and often on the basis of a relatively narrow study of an individual work, the former, for example, on the basis of Ascham's *Themata*, and the latter, his criticisms of Italy in the *Scholemaster*. More often than not, it is questioned whether he had any real religious convictions at all, pragmatism and humanism being thought to be his main priorities.⁵⁴ A fuller review of Ascham's life reveals a rather more coherent trajectory of development. His early evangelical convictions matured into a clear commitment to Protestantism which encompassed not just a pronounced Lutheran bias but distinctly Reformed leanings. He was a man who, through both circumstance and design, took an active role in the religious conflicts of the day, assiduously forged ties with other Protestants, and not only kept pace with doctrinal advances but was also impatient for more.

We should also not ignore the fact that he explicitly and positively referred to himself as a 'Protestant' on several occasions, initially applying it to himself in 1551.⁵⁵ This was a highly charged label at the time he was using it. Given its close association with the Germans of the Schmalkaldic League and its first use at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 to denote the protest staged by Lutheran princes and cities against discrimination, it perhaps points to a deliberate self-identification on Ascham's part as a Lutheran.⁵⁶ His use of the term 'Protestant' is yet more arresting in the light of Marshall's recent survey of nomenclature in the sixteenth century. Results of searches indicate that Ascham's sincere and incorporative use of 'Protestant' was unique in the period before its more common utilization in the 1580s.⁵⁷ There can be no doubt that Ascham, in using the appellation, intended to make distinctions

⁵³ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.99; ODNB for Ascham by Rosemary O'Day; J. Strype, *Life of the learned Sir Thomas Smith* (Oxford, 1820), p. 50; D. MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 325; the source of the 'Puritan' label is given in Ryan, *Ascham*, p.100.

⁵⁴ ODNB for Ascham; Ryan, *Ascham*, p.4.

⁵⁵ Letter to Edward Raven, former pupil and friend from St John's and frequent bearer of Ascham's letters, (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, pp.248 and 255; other examples include his *Report (passim)* and his *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.161 and 234. He also used the verb *protestor* in his *Apologia* of 1547 (a use I refer to in chapter 3).

⁵⁶ Even at the start of Edward VI's reign, the planners of the coronation appointed a place for 'the Protestants' by which they meant diplomatic representatives of the reforming Germans staying in the capital: D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's house divided, 1490-1700*, (London, 2003), p.xx.

⁵⁷ P. Marshall, 'The naming of Protestant England', as per his footnote 58 (in the online version, Oxford journals); he refers only to Ascham's *Report* and *Scholemaster* and not the 1551 letter to Raven.

between people on religious grounds, and in doing so helped in a significant way to intensify and reinforce existing divisions.

Simply by being in Cambridge during the first half of the sixteenth century one's religious and theological awareness could not but be shaped and sharpened. All members of the University, and particularly St John's College, must have been deeply affected by the religious developments that had been and were played out there. This was one of the main national arenas for radical protests and an important centre for demarcating the parameters of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Just a few years prior to Ascham joining Cambridge, religious evangelicalism within the University had been publicly voiced and subsequently stamped on: Robert Barnes had been arrested for preaching in Cambridge against clerical corruption; Thomas Bilney of Trinity Hall, together with a St John's fellow, Thomas Arthur, were hauled before the authorities in 1527 on the grounds of illegal preaching against idolatry and intercession of saints, and a number of University men left the country as a consequence.⁵⁸ Bilney was burnt at the stake during Ascham's first year in Cambridge. These were not events that would be easily forgotten: even as late as 1548, for example, a tract by a Cambridge contemporary of Ascham wistfully referred to the burning of 'pore Bilney'.⁵⁹

It appears that many of the religious disturbances that arose in Cambridge revolved around Lutheranism, an interest that emerged as early as the 1520s and did not appear to wane.⁶⁰ Pockets of Lutheran radicalism seem to have been a particular problem at St John's, a suspected Lutheran being 'outed' in 1527.⁶¹ An index of the hold Lutheranism had was the fact that two very senior Johnians felt the need to vent their anti-Lutheran feelings in sermon, print and statute. Nicholas Metcalfe, long-standing master of the college, preached against Lutheranism in 1526.⁶² Fisher, by far the most prestigious figure in the college and Chancellor of the University since 1504, set out in print his opposition against Luther.⁶³ He

⁵⁸ H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), chapter 3; Linehan, *St John's*, p.25; K.D. Maas, *The Reformation and Robert Barnes* (Chipenham and Eastbourne, 2010), chapter 1; R. Rex 'The Early Impact of Reformation Theology at Cambridge University 1521-1547', *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 2 (1999), pp.38-71.

⁵⁹ Anthony Gilby's preface to his *An ansvver to the deuillish detection of Stephane Gardiner* (London, 1547/8) (STC 11884), sig.A4^r.

⁶⁰ Ryrie argues that, at a national level, the dominant strain in evangelicalism right up to Edward's reign was Lutheranism: 'Strange Death of Lutheran England', *J.E.H.*, 53, 1 (2002), p.68. Rex attests to the high levels of engagement with Lutheranism in Cambridge in the first half of the sixteenth century ('Early Impact'), pp.38-71.

⁶¹ Rex, 'Early Impact', p.43.

⁶² Rex, *Theology Fisher*, p.84.

⁶³ *The sermon of Johan the Bysshop of Rochester made agayn the pernicious doctryn of M. Luuther* (1521).

also made provision in his 1530 statutes for the college to put on trial and deprive ‘adherents of the rampant heresies of Lutherans, Oecolampadians, Wycliffites, Hussites’, effectively making the issue of the Lutheranism a major factor in one’s entitlement to study there.⁶⁴ It has been argued that Lutheranism was the actual reason for Bilney falling foul of the authorities and that Barnes was in fact examined for being a Lutheran.⁶⁵ A staunch advocate of ‘pure Lutheranism’ in the 1530s, the Scottish scholar, Alexander Alesius, a lecturer and appointee of Thomas Cromwell, was forced to leave Cambridge after the Act of the Six Articles.⁶⁶ Similarly, in 1545, *Pammachius*, a tragedy written by a German Lutheran which was staged at Christ’s College in Cambridge, so upset Gardiner, the University Chancellor, that he launched an investigation.⁶⁷ The currents of Lutheranism were an important element of the religious Reformation that was evolving there. Among members of the University, an acquaintance with Luther’s views was guaranteed; it was very likely too that many would be profoundly touched by his far-reaching theological messages.

With the growth in the Henry VIII’s personal investment in the religion of the State, particularly from 1529 onwards, University members were confronted with an even starker set of choices, this time both religious and political. In 1530 views of the most senior members of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were canvassed regarding the *Collectanea Satis Copiosa*, a collection of historical documents designed to prove the absolute supremacy of the Kings of England over the Church, including over the Pope, in order that an annulment of Henry’s marriage to Catherine of Aragon might be legitimized. In 1534 Cambridge was asked directly whether they supported the royal supremacy and Henry hand-picked Cambridge men to preach at Cambridge against papal despotism in 1534.⁶⁸ The shockwaves of Henry’s policies had arguably more of an impact on St John’s than any other college. A breach of immense significance with the founder of the St John’s, John Fisher, was triggered. In 1532 Fisher took a direct stance against the King, publicly preaching

⁶⁴ Mayor, *Statutes*, p.212.

⁶⁵ Rex, ‘Early Impact’, pp.51 and 44; M. Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII* (London, 1986), p.80.

⁶⁶ Rex, ‘Early Impact’, pp.64-66. Alesius had spent the early 1530s in Wittenberg where he fell under the spell of Luther and Melancthon; upon arrival in Cambridge, he had tried to promote the teachings of the Germans (ODNB).

⁶⁷ A. Rylie, *Gospel and Henry VIII: evangelicals in the early English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003), p.179. The play lampooned the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church and especially the failings of the Popes.

⁶⁸ J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, (Oxford, 1822), book 1, p.268; Ryan, *Ascham*, p.23. The appointed preachers were John Skip, Doctor of Theology at Gonville Hall, and Simon Heynes, the then Vice Chancellor of the University.

against Henry's divorce and refusing to swear the oath of supremacy or to reject the Pope.⁶⁹ He was immediately imprisoned in the Tower and beheaded in 1535. Another high-profile college casualty, on account of his close association with Fisher and his papal affiliation, was the then master of the college, Metcalfe, who was forced to resign in 1537.⁷⁰ Such episodes must have tested loyalties in a serious way. They certainly galvanised the conservatives at St John's, many of whom emerged as fervent exponents of Fisher, for example, John Redman.⁷¹ The extent of the college's loyalty to Fisher may be inferred from the fact Henry, almost a decade after Fisher's fall, felt the need to use college statutes to decree Fisher a public enemy and make it mandatory to expunge all references to him.⁷²

It is important to bear in mind these events were all taking place during Ascham's first few years at the University. He was then still an impressionable teenager and they must have made a significant impact. What is so interesting to observe is how quickly Ascham's own religious views matured. In spite of his attendance at a resolutely conservative Cambridge college and his northern roots, which often bred an instinctively traditional outlook, Ascham was not sympathetic to the conservative cause. He made it very clear that he fully sided with the King's anti-papal policies. In the spring of 1534, shortly after being admitted BA and having been nominated for a fellowship, Ascham almost jeopardised this promotion by speaking out publicly against the Pope.⁷³ Metcalfe called Ascham's candidacy into question and urged other fellows to boycott it. As it turned out, Metcalfe in the end relented and ratified the appointment probably, as Ryan conjectures, owing to Ascham's outstanding academic potential. However, his apparent recklessness at an important time in his academic career does point to genuine theological conviction on Ascham's part and a clear sense of his reformist fervour.

Well before evangelicalism had really started to take a grip in the University, some were beginning to detect in Ascham certain non-conformist tendencies. In a letter of 1534, a college mentor, Greek tutor and friend, Robert Pember, cautioned Ascham to strive to 'strike

⁶⁹ Leader, *History Cambridge*, p.329.

⁷⁰ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.31.

⁷¹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.344. Redman was a conservative theologian who was not sympathetic to the Edwardine Reformation (ODNB).

⁷² Linehan, *St John's*, p.43.

⁷³ Ascham, *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.234-5. The only source for this is Ascham himself. Even if the episode did not happen in quite the way he retells it, the fact he even chose to describe himself in such a way is revealing.

not the Stoic but the Lyric note'.⁷⁴ Hatch has construed this as a warning from an ally that some frowned on him as an innovator.⁷⁵ It is evident from correspondence that Ascham was also regularly embroiled in rows. One blew up in 1539 between him, on the one hand, and Redman, Seton and Thomas Watson, on the other.⁷⁶ On the face of it, this was over the appointment of a fellow: Ascham supported a former pupil of his, Thomson; a different candidate was backed by the other three. It is quite probable, however, that religious affiliation lay at the root of this. In a letter which detailed the disagreement, Ascham would also make reference to the 'harsh times in which we live and the obstinate customs of men who pay no attention to Scriptures', adding, a little defensively perhaps, that his candidate Thomson was 'untouched by insolence, pure and untainted by insane doctrines'.⁷⁷ Added to this, Redman, Seton and Watson were staunch conservatives.⁷⁸

Not long afterwards, Ascham found himself involved in another theologically awkward situation. As described above, in 1542 Ascham had decided to send as a gift one of his Latin translations of Oecumenius's commentaries, the letter to Titus, to Lee, the Archbishop of York. Lee, however, returned the manuscript immediately, upset, he claimed, by the inclusion of a reference to married clergy (verse 1:6 of the text reading: 'the husband of one wife' with reference to bishops).⁷⁹ On this occasion, it is almost certainly the case that Ascham had not deliberately intended to take a controversial theological stand, especially with a man he hoped would become his patron, and he promptly wrote a number of abject letters of apology, clearly shaken by the affair.⁸⁰ However, in relying on the original Greek of Chrysostom, Ascham had drawn attention to a major theological dispute of the Reformation: the right of clerical marriage would be an important Protestant argument during the first half of Edward's reign.⁸¹ It is furthermore illuminating to note how in one of the letters of apology to Lee, Ascham was careful to attribute the 'poison' to the commentaries of

⁷⁴ Pember's letter to Ascham, (L) H:1.

⁷⁵ Note to letter H:1. Pember, according to Ryan, never gave up his support of Catholicism (*Ascham*, p.18).

⁷⁶ Letters sent by Ascham: to the then master of St John's, John Taylor, (L) G:vol.1, 5/H:7, 1539; to Cumberforde (L) G:vol.1, 7 /H:9, 1539/40; to Redman (L) G:vol.1, 20, 1543/H:23, 1544.

⁷⁷ Ascham's letter to Henry Cumberforde, a former fellow of St John's: (L) G:vol.1, 7/H:9, 1539/40.

⁷⁸ See ODNB for each of these men.

⁷⁹ Epistle to Titus, 1:6 (as per Great Bible).

⁸⁰ There are two letters of apology to Lee: (L) G:vol.1, 13/H:13, 1542; and (L) G:vol.1, 16/H:19, 1543. He also referred, with regret, to the affair in a letter to Redman (L) G:vol.1, 20, p.43/H:23, 1543/4.

⁸¹ It is further interesting that the Epistle to Titus would, in time, become relevant in another explosive doctrinal contest, that concerning the presence: Jerome's commentary on Epistle to Titus was, for example, used by Richard Smith in his *Assertion and Defence of the sacrament of the Aaltar* (London, 1546) (STC 22815) as evidence in support of the real presence.

Oecumenius rather than to Chrysostom and the other Fathers.⁸² In fact, though Ascham never said as much in writing, he was vindicated: Chrysostom, whose writings Ascham carefully ensured that he checked after the event, in fact clearly does view the verse as directly applicable to bishops and fully endorses their entering into marriage (albeit once).⁸³ One wonders whether this was a formative moment in the development of Ascham's profound antipathy for Church doctrine without a Scriptural basis and another indication of his instinctively evangelical bent.

During the first half of the 1540s, evangelicalism was making a slow but distinct advance in the college.⁸⁴ Judging from regular references in letters by Ascham during this time to an atmosphere of acrimony, he was almost certainly embroiled in this evangelical groundswell. In a letter to Lee of 1544, Ascham referred to himself as the subject of 'men's gossip' and on the receiving end of 'accusations of improper and perverse beliefs'.⁸⁵ Regrets of a similar type can be found in other letters written around that time to Redman, Cheke and William Grindal.⁸⁶ In the letter to Redman, he alluded to 'those who attempt to destroy my whole reputation with many eminent men'. To Cheke, he lamented his alienation from some at college, together with the very cryptic protestation: 'But they have not deterred me from defending my principles in my old common cause' and referred to 'opposing camps' within the college. In the letter to Grindal, he described with sorrow 'certain men's malevolence'. One can also speculate on Ascham's role in the highly contested 1542 election of the evangelical, Thomas Lever, to a college fellowship.⁸⁷ The quarrel had become so intractable that it had had to be referred to Bishop Goodrich, the Bishop of Ely.⁸⁸ One of Ascham's letters made express mention of a 'conversation' Ascham had with Goodrich at John's during

⁸² (L) G:vol.1, 16/H:19, 1543.

⁸³ Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle of St Paul to Titus*, ii. See Ascham's letters which refer to his checking of Chrysostom: to Redman (L) G:vol.1, 20, pp.43-45/H:23, 1543/4 and to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 21/H:24, 1544.

⁸⁴ Linehan, *St. John's*, p.37.

⁸⁵ (L) G:vol.1, 18/H:21.

⁸⁶ To Redman (L) G:vol.1, 20, especially, p.40/H:23, 1543/4; to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 23/H:26, 1544; and to Grindal (L) G:vol.1, 26/H:29 undated, but probably 1544. Grindal was one of Ascham's best students of Greek at St John's (ODNB).

⁸⁷ The affair is set out in more detail in Linehan, *St John's*, p.38. This was Thomas Lever who would take a leading part in the disputations about the Mass in 1547. According to his entry in ODNB, he would emerge as the leader of the more advanced evangelical party in college and become one of Edward VI's licensed preachers, notorious for his uncompromising and fiery Protestant sermons. In 1551 he would himself serve as Master of St John's. Under Mary, he fled to the continent.

⁸⁸ The college lay within his jurisdiction of Ely: J.B. Mullinger, *A History of the University of Cambridge* (Longmans, 1888), p.125.

the latter's visit consequent upon the referral.⁸⁹ It is quite possible too that the underlying reason for Ascham's dedication to Goodrich of the Oecumenius translation of the Titus epistle was as a token of thanks for the positive (for Lever) resolution of the dispute.

An interesting manifestation of the reformist urgency which made Ascham the enemies he had described was a letter he sent to Cranmer in 1545 requesting a dispensation from eating fish during Lent.⁹⁰ This was, almost certainly, a roundabout way of advertising his objections to the act of Lenten fasting.⁹¹ In this letter, in conjunction with his request for an exemption from fish, he carefully and deliberately attributed the 'superstition' of fish-eating to 'papist bilgewater'.⁹² Ascham's timeliness in protesting against this particular Catholic obligation was striking. In 1548 fasting at Lent was confirmed by Cranmer as a mere positive law, not a religious duty, as reinforced by visitation articles issued in the second year of the reign.⁹³

Ascham's *Themata Theologica* (mentioned earlier), composed around 1545, was another example of the advanced nature of his theological thought relative to its time and a further index of the extent to which he had been affected by the religious climate in Cambridge. The work was overtly Lutheran, robust in its criticism of Roman ceremonies and totally anti-papal. It was vehemently hostile about Reginald Pole: there was even a pun on his name: 'Or should I not, using his name, embarrass that man Reginald Pole; between each pole [of the earth] no one more wicked and more abominable has ever existed who...[lives] outside of Christ in his duty than him'.⁹⁴ Ascham was explicit about the fact Pole had defected (in his words) not just from the fatherland and the King, but from Christ to the Pope.⁹⁵ Notably, the work also engaged with two of the most controversial theological issues of the Reformation - *iustitia* ('justice', 'righteousness' or 'justification') and sin. These were issues that had generated fierce debate in Cambridge since Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone had gained wide publicity there. Fisher had famously opposed Luther in his *Assertionis Lutheranae Confutatio* of 1523, arguing instead for a greater balance between divine and

⁸⁹ Ascham's letter to Goodrich contained in Rawlinson MS D.1317: *me ad privata cum Dominatione tua colloquia...admisisti*, 'You admitted me to private conferences with your lordship' (as per my translation).

⁹⁰ (L) G:vol.1, 27/H:30 and J. Strype, *Memorials of Thomas Cranmer* ed., P.E. Barnes (London, 1853), vol.1, pp.239-41.

⁹¹ On fasting, see Ryrie's 'The Fall and Rise of Fasting in the British Reformations' in A. Ryrie and N. Mears (eds.), *Worship and the Parish Church in Early Modern Britain* (Farnham, 2013).

⁹² (L) G:vol.1, 27, pp.65-66/H:30, 1545.

⁹³ Strype, *Cranmer*, vol.1, pp.241-2. Cranmer agreed to Ascham's request: see Ascham letter to Cranmer (L) G:vol.1, 29/H:33, 1545.

⁹⁴ *Themata*, p.228.

⁹⁵ *Themata*, p.228.

human initiative.⁹⁶ Ascham's *Themata* inclined towards the Lutheran position. On the question of the free will, Ascham was clear to stress the Fall and the redeeming power of Christ: 'Regarding this matter [of free will], it should be enough that only this is said by me: human choice was greatly corrupted by the Fall of Adam and brought back as it were into a certain house which has been very badly built, [but] in truth the same was restored in some way by the extraordinary service of Christ's death'.⁹⁷ He made reference to mankind overcoming *per cuius gratiam solius* ('though his [ie. God's] grace alone'), stressing that man must not compete with God, and that Christ was the fulfilment of the law for the justification of everyone who had faith.⁹⁸ He placed a high value on the living a life with *iusticia*, but was emphatic about the fact that that all spiritual good performed by man originated in God and *iusticia* was God's to give: 'His glory is our glory, his justification is our justification, his works are our works, as in Isaiah 26: you have wrought all our works in us'.⁹⁹ Throughout, weight was given to expressions of pessimism about the human condition and sin. Parts of the *Themata* that dwelt on suffering and persecution were startlingly reminiscent of Luther's *theologia crucis* ('theology of the cross').¹⁰⁰ Sections of Ascham's *Themata* also suggested that Ascham did, as his annotations on the Ambrose tract also hinted at, in fact accept the principle of double predestination. Albeit, in keeping with his Ambrose annotations, this came with a forceful reminder of the need for a moral life, he stated quite explicitly: 'These things [he is referring to fear and labour] are of course good when they are also given to all these men whom he predestined to death. How great therefore are those things which he is going to give to these men whom he has predestined to life?'¹⁰¹

The growing strength of Ascham's reforming zeal can also be witnessed in several expressions of evangelicalism which not only aimed to advertise his theological position but also targeted the most powerful in the land. In 1544 he composed two poems in honour of Henry VIII and the prince Edward respectively.¹⁰² The poem to Henry effectively functioned as a celebration of Henry's religious Reformation. Ascham aggressively castigated the Pope:

⁹⁶ J. Fisher, *Assertionis Lutheranae Confutatio* (Paris, 1523).

⁹⁷ *Themata*, p.222.

⁹⁸ *Themata*, pp.155, 222, 183 and 192-193.

⁹⁹ *Themata*, p.208.

¹⁰⁰ A. McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's theological breakthrough* (Oxford, 1985). See my chapter 3.

¹⁰¹ *Themata*, pp.221 and 156.

¹⁰² Eight of Ascham's Latin poems are set out in G:vol.3, pp.277-293. The other two were a distich on Prince Edward's tutors and a lost Psalm against the Turks. For a discussion of the dating of the poems, see Ryan, *Ascham*, p.43.

‘the awful power of the Roman pontiff.../With treachery driven out, you die, corrupt Pope./Corrupt Pope, you die./We all drive away your chains./ The whole of England shivers at your name’. He then proceeded to praise Henry’s restoration of the sacred Bible ‘which hid for a long time in the shadows’.¹⁰³ He used the poem addressed to Edward as another opportunity to express his joy that the ‘Roman beast and dogmatic torch are far from here’. Although Henry was constant in his loathing of the Pope, post 1543 his sympathies did seem to veer more towards the conservatives and Ascham’s rhetoric here present us with a man not just of conviction but of no little courage.

These poems were also, of course, bids for patronage by Ascham at a time of acute impecuniosity. Early in 1544 he had received practically nothing on the death of his father and remained dependent upon his college and University income and pension.¹⁰⁴ But, however much in need of funds he was, he turned down in the same year two offers of income. Posts had been suggested in two prestigious and cultivated households: firstly as secretary to Charles Blount, fifth Lord Mountjoy, and tutor to his children; and secondly as tutor to Thomas More’s grandchildren, the children of Margaret Roper.¹⁰⁵ Though Ascham did not openly admit this and no historian has explained it in these terms, the reason for Ascham declining both was almost certainly religious.¹⁰⁶ Both Mountjoy and More had worked in some way to impede the evangelical reforms of Henry’s government.¹⁰⁷ In fact, in an off-the-record letter to Redman, Ascham had already evinced his disdain for Mountjoy, referring to him as a ‘silly bird’.¹⁰⁸ He would also go on to explicitly criticise More in his *Apologia* of 1547.¹⁰⁹

A further example of the way in which Ascham incorporated evangelical propaganda into his search for patronage came in 1545 with the publication of his *Toxophilus* which he dedicated again to Henry and a host of other powerful luminaries.¹¹⁰ The *Toxophilus* was a treatise

¹⁰³ There exists no published translation of his Latin verses; the translations are mine.

¹⁰⁴ ODNB for Ascham.

¹⁰⁵ Ascham letters to: Mountjoy (L) G:vol.1, 19/H:22, 1544; and to Lady Clark in which he referred to the offer of a place at the Roper household (L) G:vol.1, 166 /H:153, 1554.

¹⁰⁶ Vos and Hatch cite the Mountjoy episode as a reflection of Ascham’s diffidence about entering into Court life (V&H, p.39).

¹⁰⁷ ODNB entries for Charles Blount, Fifth Baron Mountjoy, and Thomas More. More’s resistance to the King’s break with the Pope has been well rehearsed (J.A. Guy, *Thomas More* (London, 2000).

¹⁰⁸ (G:vol.1, 20, p.41/H:23, 1543/4).

¹⁰⁹ *Apologia*, pp.15 and 66.

¹¹⁰ See Ryan, *Ascham*, p.49 for a discussion of the precise timing of publication and the various recipients of the tract. It is possible that it was Katherine Parr who first brought this book to the attention of Henry (Medine, ‘Art

composed in English. It was ostensibly about the art of shooting but was deeply philosophical in its overall purpose, one of its primary aims being to illustrate the attainability of perfection through knowledge and the redemptive power of human judgment.¹¹¹ More importantly, it also contained a number of significant messages concerning the matter of the nation's religion; as one historian has put it, the *Toxophilus* was 'a thinly veiled allegory favouring reform'.¹¹² The frontispiece was emblazoned with a royal coat of arms, one of the scrolls celebrated the ecclesiastical victory of Henry's secession from Rome, and the words *veritas* (truth of the Bible) and *vincit* (the power to conquer with the bow) were carefully juxtaposed. It perfectly encapsulated the militancy of national evangelicalism.¹¹³ In the dedication of the work to Henry, Ascham called for 'the utter destruction of papistry and heresy and for the continual setting forth of God's word', praising again his achievements thus far in banishing 'Rome and heresy' and bringing 'to light God's word and verity'.¹¹⁴ In the body of the work there were a number of pointed asides and digressions which promoted various evangelical viewpoints. For example, he extolled 'the godly use of praising God by singing in church which is praised in Scripture', he referred positively to 'preachers preaching against the use of candles', and wished that the Scots would 'give over the Pope who seeks to cause dissension between England and Scotland', adding that 'Dregs of papistry dwell in Scotland'.¹¹⁵ It would be completely wrong to interpret this work as a disinterested, secular treatise. It was nothing short of an open endorsement of Henry's reform programme and a (polite) goad for further efforts.

In 1546 Ascham was appointed to the post of University Public Orator.¹¹⁶ This was a position of immense honour, the Public Orator having precedence over all other members of the University.¹¹⁷ But it was also one of influence: he was now, in effect, the spokesperson for the University. And Ascham ensured that he used it for religious purposes, especially

and Wit of Ascham's *Toxophilus*', p.48). Woodcock also discusses the service to sovereign and state Ascham's *Toxophilus* offered: M. Woodcock, 'Shooting for England: Configuring the Book and the Bow in Roger Ascham's *Toxophilus*', *S.C.J.*, 44, 4 (2010), pp.1017-1038.

¹¹¹ K.J. Wilson 'Ascham's *Toxophilus* and the Rules of Art' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 29, 1 (1976), pp.30-51; T.M. Greene, 'Roger Ascham: The Perfect End of Shooting' *E.L.H.*, 36, 4 (1969), pp.609-625.

¹¹² R. Stark, 'Protestant Theology and Apocalyptic Rhetoric in Ascham's *Scholemaster*', *J.H.I.*, 69, 4 (2008), p.517.

¹¹³ Medine 'Art and Wit of Ascham's *Toxophilus*', p.45.

¹¹⁴ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, p.76.

¹¹⁵ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, pp.29, 48 and 75-76.

¹¹⁶ He had served already for a number of years as a University secretary. Public Orator was a position he retained until 1553.

¹¹⁷ J. Heywood, *Collection of Statutes for the University and the Colleges of Cambridge* (London, 1840), pp.334-7. Previous incumbents included Croke, Day, Redman, Smith and Cheke.

upon the accession of the new King Edward VI. In many letters, he presented Cambridge as uniformly supportive of and as an active agent in the new King's Protestant programme, even though the position of the University was far from that straightforward. Such claims were particularly pointed in the months just prior to Edward's first Parliament of December 1547 when Ascham fired off letters to a huge range of powerful players. In a letter on behalf of the University to William Parr (brother of Queen Catherine, Edward VI's uncle and First Marquess of Northampton), Ascham wrote: 'We shall all pray God together that no trace of papist impurity abide in any part of the faith. But what about ignorance? It should be removed from all the people. By whose labour? The educated. And where are they? In the Universities'.¹¹⁸ In a letter to the Duke of Somerset in the name of his college, he described the chief goal of John's men as 'spread[ing] the Gospel to God's people, then, as much as possible, to abolish human doctrine, that is, papistry with its hypocrisy, superstition and idolatry' and referred with venom to 'the Babylonian owls who hate the evangelical light'.¹¹⁹

In private letters sent at the same time, his Protestant message was again clear. In a letter to John Astley, cousin to princess Elizabeth and influential member of Parliament, Ascham emphasised his hope (which he reinforced with a prayer to God) that all *ethelothrēskeia* (written in Greek typeface) would be removed in this Parliament.¹²⁰ *Ethelothrēskeia* was a Greek word meaning 'will-worship' and used by Paul in the New Testament to describe a form of heretical behaviour.¹²¹ It was a term used on more than one occasion by Ascham and by other Protestants to denote religious practices which privileged the freedom of the will over the commandments of Scripture.¹²² The fact Ascham carefully used a Greek term here was almost certainly indicative of the fact that he was touching on a difficult and dangerous topic.

¹¹⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 69/H:70, 1547.

¹¹⁹ (L) G:vol.1, 76, p.141/V&H:26, 1547.

¹²⁰ (L) G:vol.1, 55/H: 66, 1547. I disagree with Hatch's translation of the verb *tollo* which governs the noun 'will-worship' as 'carry out'; *tollo* can also mean 'remove' and that seems far more probable here.

¹²¹ Colossians 2:23, translated in the Great Bible as 'supersticyon'.

¹²² In his letter to Raven, Ascham exclaimed sarcastically about a member of the Emperor's Council: 'a wonderful ἐθελοθησκεια (*ethelothrēskeia*) to live so abominable all the year and then will needs make amends with God whether he will or not' ((E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, p.285). He used it in a letter of 1547 sent to Cranmer on behalf of Cambridge University (as set out in vol.2, appendix 38 of Strype *Cranmer*), referring to how the *Aper de Sylva* ('the wylde bore oute of the wood' of Psalm 80:13, as per Great Bible), and here meaning the Pope, was about to corrupt and defile everything through 'human will-worship'. He also used it in his *Apologia* (as discussed in chapter 3). Gilby wrote 'Marke howe Paule calleth all your doctrines ἐθελοθησκεια (*ethelothrēskeia*) will-holiness because they come of your fonde wills and of no precept or commandment of God' (*An Answer*, sig.Cc8^r); Cheke also used it in the preface to his translation of Plutarch's *On Superstition* to denote the worship of one's own inventions; see translation of the preface by William Elstob as appended to J. Strype, *The Life of the learned Sir John Cheke* (Oxford, 1821).

It has been said of Ascham that he was a timid man ‘on the fringe of influence’ who preferred the safe haven of Cantabrigdian study.¹²³ In particular, there has been a focus on the twin (and often mutually opposing) claims on his life, namely his role as Cambridge don and courtier, with a corresponding emphasis on his subordination within the patronage system.¹²⁴ This is a valid tension to highlight, but insufficiently balanced to take into account the sway his position in the University afforded and the power of his academic pedigree.¹²⁵ Nor indeed does it bear scrutiny with his assertive attempts outlined above to buttress the reform movement. What is more, at the start of 1548, Ascham secured yet another highly prestigious post, that of royal tutor to Elizabeth.¹²⁶ Not enough has been made by historians either of the religious influence of royal tutors generally on their charges or, more specifically, of Ascham’s carefully planned-out reading regimen for the future Queen of England. The reading material Ascham used during his lessons with Elizabeth comprised a substantial number of ancient Greek texts, including Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles, from which, in Ascham’s words, ‘she would derive linguistic purity’.¹²⁷ Another important focus was the New Testament in Greek. Even more interesting was his use of Cyprian and the *Commonplaces* of Melanchthon so as to ensure ‘an infusion of the correct doctrine’.¹²⁸ This was no neutral reading list. Rather, it reflected a deliberate policy to steer the daughter of a monarch and potential future ruler in a distinctly Protestant direction which had at its centre *ad fontes* and *sola scriptura*, the Greek Fathers and the doctrine of Philipp Melanchthon. As Stark puts it, Ascham taught Elizabeth key Protestant beliefs including the importance of a powerful English idiom and ‘the proper religion’.¹²⁹ In parallel with this, Ascham held another post at court, one that, on the face of it, seemed relatively insignificant: keeper of the King’s Library.¹³⁰ However, in the context of a new openly Protestant Edwardine regime which placed a high importance on written texts, this was no innocuous position. In

¹²³ V&H, p.11.

¹²⁴ V&H, introduction.

¹²⁵ Interestingly, Johnson, in his *Life of Ascham*, comments that Ascham’s financial fortunes were not proportionate to his office and the esteem in which he was held (*Biographical Writings Johnson*, ed., Fleeman, p.508).

¹²⁶ It appears from a letter Ascham sent to Cheke that there was some competition for this role and that Cheke may well have helped his cause (L) G:vol.1, 85/V&H:29, February 1548. Prior to this, Ascham had been writing tutor to the prince Edward and Charles Brandon.

¹²⁷ As described in a letter he sent to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.192/V&H:99, 1550.

¹²⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.192/V&H:99, 1550.

¹²⁹ Stark, ‘Protestant Theology and Apocalyptic Rhetoric in Ascham’s *Scholemaster*’, p.532.

¹³⁰ We know about this post from Ascham’s letter to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 113, p.238/V&H:36, 1551.

Bartholemew Traheron, another Protestant and later Marian exile, took over from him when Ascham was away in Germany.

Reformation terms, books mattered. Why else would international reformers such as Simon Grynaeus devote time to inspecting libraries in England?¹³¹

The early Edwardine Reformation was influenced to a great extent by the international reform movement.¹³² Ascham too had a strong affinity with the continental Protestant Reformation and its reformers. Ascham's interest in and approbation of Melanchthon, for example, was a long-lasting one. Melanchthon's name featured repeatedly in his extensive correspondence.¹³³ In 1550 Ascham visited the house where Melanchthon was born, reporting on the fact with great joy.¹³⁴ Although he seems to have had some reservations about Melanchthon's position on *adiaphora*, he nonetheless noted the number of loyal supporters Melanchthon garnered.¹³⁵ Ascham also took an active interest in Melanchthon's reform activities: in the Ambrose text (referred to above), adjacent to a section which dealt with man's Fall and the sin of virtue devoid of true worship, there is a note in the margin about a dispute between Eberhard Billick and Melanchthon; the note read *Edward Billick ista refutat contra Melanct* [sic].¹³⁶ It was an international theological quarrel that Ascham himself would join in; according to a letter Ascham sent from Germany, Billick had refused to meet Ascham on the ground that Ascham was a 'Protestant', Ascham referring to him as a 'Popistant'.¹³⁷ Upon Melanchthon's death, he would express great regret and concern for the Protestant cause generally.¹³⁸ Melanchthon was also mentioned and praised in Ascham's last work, the *Scholemaster*.¹³⁹

¹³¹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.61-62.

¹³² In particular, MacCulloch's *Cranmer* and his *Reformation*; he has also been quite insistent that no distinction should be made between Reformations in England and the Continent: 'Sixteenth-century English Protestantism and the Continent' in D. Wendebourg (ed.), *Sister Reformations: The Reformation in Germany and in England* (Tübingen, 2010), p.1.

¹³³ To Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 108, p.219/V&H:34, 1550, to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.192/V&H:39, 1550, to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, pp.259-26, to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 135/V&H:46, 1552 and to Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 34, pp.65-66/H:206, 1562.

¹³⁴ Letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, pp.259-260.

¹³⁵ Letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, p.260.

¹³⁶ Ascham's annotations on Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, p.14. Billick was one of the most outspoken opponents of Protestantism in Cologne. It is likely that Ascham's reference here relates to a dispute which arose pursuant to the Diets of Hagenau, Worms and Regensburg during the 1540s in which Melanchthon and Billick were on opposite sides.

¹³⁷ (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, p.255. Another reason for Ascham's interest in this quarrel may have been the fact that it originally involved Bucer (see below), Billick writing against him in 1543. There is also a little-referenced manuscript letter (as far as I know, untranslated) held in the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which documents the controversy triggered by Billick: *Epistola Ioannis Mey ad Bucerum in qua multa narrat de disputatione orta de natura sanctae caenae et de moribus flagitiosis cuiusdam Billici monachi Coloniensis, 1546* (catalogue number 74, p.209).

¹³⁸ Ascham letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 34, p.66/H:206, 1562.

¹³⁹ In his *Scholemaster*, Ascham picked out Melanchthon's world history, the *Chronicon Carionis* of 1558/60, as being the best example of the use of epitome (G:vol.3, p.207).

In 1549 Martin Bucer, a Strasbourg reformer, was invited by the Edwardine government to England. Letters suggest that Ascham had close contact with this reformer too. He actually met Bucer as soon as he had arrived in the country when Bucer was still lodged at Lambeth Palace with Archbishop Cranmer.¹⁴⁰ After Bucer had been appointed Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, Ascham was part of his intimate circle.¹⁴¹ Grant, in his life of Ascham, emphasised the closeness of their relationship: ‘To what man was Roger Ascham more dear than to Bucer? What man was dearer to Roger Ascham than Bucer? What man did Roger Ascham embrace with greater affection? To what man did Roger Ascham pay his observance, and venerate and cultivate with greater faithfulness, duty and zeal?’¹⁴² Ascham’s correspondence also testifies to the influence Bucer had exercised over him in matters of religion and the keen interest he himself had in Bucer’s views. In one letter he described Bucer as ‘that man of God who arouses the glory of Christ in us with deep spirit...’ and in another, recalled the discussions he had with Bucer ‘about religion, the conditions and changes within the State and about the correct course of learning’.¹⁴³ When Bucer unexpectedly died in February 1551, Ascham was a participant in the collective mourning and commemoration of him that took place within the Protestant party. Two of Ascham’s Latin poems commemorated his passing; both poems referred disparagingly to Bucer’s adversaries, ‘the papists’ and, in the second poem, Ascham wrote, rather touchingly, that Bucer’s life ‘belongs to Paul’.¹⁴⁴ He also contributed to a memorial volume of orations and epigrams (*De obitu doctissimi et sanctissimi theology doctoris Martini Bucer*) edited by Cheke.¹⁴⁵ Ascham and Sturm even discussed the possibility of collaborating on the production of an encomiastic preface and *vita* to Bucer’s *De regno Christi* (‘On the Kingdom of Christ’).¹⁴⁶ Ascham’s involvement in this collective commemoration of Bucer should not be downplayed. Those involved in the ‘Bucerian memorial volumes’ were representative of a

¹⁴⁰ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.116.

¹⁴¹ The Cambridge circle has been described as ‘another channel for Bucer’s influence on the English Reformation’ (N. Scott-Amos, ‘Protestant Exiles in England: Martin Bucer, the Measured Approach to Reform, and the Elizabethan Settlement’ in Wendebourg, (ed.), *Sister Reformations*, p.168).

¹⁴² Grant, *Vita*, para.20.

¹⁴³ Letters to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.189/V&H:39, 1550 and (L) G:vol.1,126/V&H:43, 1551.

¹⁴⁴ G:vol.3, pp.287-288.

¹⁴⁵ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.144.

¹⁴⁶ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.144.

culture which integrated traditions of classical humanism and Protestant belief and established a community influential in the movement for religious reform.¹⁴⁷

Ascham would himself go to Germany for three years from 1550 to 1553, having been appointed secretary to Sir Richard Morison, the royal ambassador to Emperor Charles V.¹⁴⁸ Ascham's role has attracted little attention in the history books, any reference to his time there being largely limited to observations about the mutual humanist interests he and Morison shared.¹⁴⁹ However, his trip can be seen from a completely different perspective – one entirely bound up with religious reform and theological development. The fact he was chosen to be a part of Morison's entourage in the first place was revealing. This was an expedition of enormous sensitivity, risk and opportunity: on the one hand, a brand new Protestant regime was doing diplomatic business with a Catholic Emperor, on the other, it opened up possible alliances with Protestants abroad at a critical time.¹⁵⁰ As Sowerby puts it, the ambassador and his team were the King's direct representatives abroad and their every action reflected and commented upon the action of the monarch himself.¹⁵¹ Ascham himself was very much on the front-line: when, for example, in 1552 Morison was ill, it was Ascham who deputed for him; Ascham described how he himself took letters to Edward VI; he described too how he spoke with the chief preacher in Augsburg and dined with the ambassador of Venice.¹⁵² Morison was also a well-known proponent of the evangelical movement.¹⁵³ It is unlikely, given the personal nature of how such appointments worked, that Ascham would be chosen as secretary to such a figure if their religious views were not in some way compatible. In fact, when Morison (perhaps rather too) stridently preached at

¹⁴⁷ S. Alford, *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.129 and 132. J.F. McDiarmid, 'Classical Epitaphs for Heroes of Faith: Mid-Tudor Neo-Latin Memorial Volumes and Their Protestant Humanist context', *International Journal of Classical Tradition*, 3, 1 (1996), pp.29-32.

¹⁴⁸ Personal contacts almost certainly secured this post for Ascham. He heard of the appointment via Cheke. Ascham and Morison also both had northern connections: T.A. Sowerby, *Renaissance and reform in Tudor England: the careers of Sir Richard Morison* (Oxford, 2010), p.1. Additionally, Ascham may have become acquainted with Morison when he was tutoring Charles Brandon: Morison was great friends with the Duchess of Suffolk (Sowerby, *Morison*, p.152).

¹⁴⁹ Even Sowerby's book does not explore Ascham's part in any real depth; Ryan, *Ascham*, chapters 7 and 8; ODNB for Morison.

¹⁵⁰ A letter sent to Ascham from Sturm referred to a 'religious union brokered by Morison's party': (L) G:vol.1, 109/H:110, 1550.

¹⁵¹ Sowerby, *Morison*, p.190.

¹⁵² Sowerby, *Morison*, p.208; Ascham, *A Report*, G:vol.3, pp.29, 39 and 58.

¹⁵³ Sowerby charts his evangelical maturing from Henry's through to Edward's reign (*Morison, passim*). She also highlights his important role in several key reforming projects, such as the attempted union with the Protestant Schmalkaldic League in 1538 and the commission to remove idolatrous images in 1547. He had close ties with certain European reformers like Bernadino Ochino and Peter Martyr Vermigli and, upon the accession of Mary, went into self-imposed exile to Strasbourg.

Charles about the new faith, thereby earning him the reputation of ‘notorious heretic’, Ascham wrote a letter in full support of Morison.¹⁵⁴

During the three year embassy, Morison and Ascham took seriously the business of networking, especially with Protestant reformers. Morison was in contact with Bullinger and there was apparently a plan to visit Bullinger in Zurich at some point.¹⁵⁵ In 1550 they met the Protestant Landgrave of Hesse.¹⁵⁶ They stayed with the brother-in-law of Melanchthon in Bretta.¹⁵⁷ Ascham introduced Morison to the pedagogue Hieronymus Wolf, a former student of Melanchthon, whom he met at the Fuggers’ Library in Augsburg.¹⁵⁸ Wolf also introduced Ascham to Joachim Camerarius, another intimate of Melanchthon, who had helped the latter draw up the Augsburg Confession.¹⁵⁹ It was, however, in Strasbourg, a staunchly Lutheran base, where the most enduring bonds with reformers were established.¹⁶⁰ Strasbourg reformers took a keen interest in the English Reformation and strong ties were forged with Michael Toxites, a religious reformer, who had composed a poem for Edward VI in which he outlined the new King’s duty to purify religion. He commended Morison as an evangelical of England and asked Ascham to convey a work to Elizabeth.¹⁶¹ It was here too that Morison and Ascham stayed with the Protestant and humanist Johannes Sleidan.¹⁶² In his *History of the Reformation*, a work replete with references to the progress of the reform movement in England, Sleidan actually catalogued the ambassadorial visit.¹⁶³ Sleidan continued to correspond with Ascham, describing for him, for example, the doctrinal developments at the Council of Trent in 1552 in a way that suggested that Ascham had more than a passing interest. Sleidan described the Council in terms of ‘The Edict of the French King against the Lutherans’ and relayed information about two monks who had fled from Rome, preaching ‘pretty freely a good many things about the celibacy of priests and the Lord’s Supper’ and

¹⁵⁴ Sowerby, *Morsion*, pp.197-200; Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.134-5. Ascham letters to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, pp.282-3 and to Raven and Ireland (E) G:vol.1, 1551, p.303.

¹⁵⁵ Sowerby, *Morison*, pp.216-7.

¹⁵⁶ Ascham’s letter to Raven, (L) G:vol.1, 106/V&H:33, 1550, for example, p.256.

¹⁵⁷ Ascham’s letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, pp.259-260.

¹⁵⁸ Ascham’s letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, p.284. This was a man whom Ascham would later refer to as ‘a friend’ (in his *Report*, G:vol.3, p.42) and the connection was subsequently shored up through correspondence.

¹⁵⁹ Ascham’s letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, p.284. Sowerby, *Morison*, p.216.

¹⁶⁰ Post 1548, Strasbourg ministers opted for a stricter Lutheranism: A. Kess, *Johann Sleidan and the Protestant Vision of History* (Aldershot, 2008), p.70.

¹⁶¹ Sowerby, *Morison*, p.217.

¹⁶² It appears that Sleidan was already known to Ascham prior to the trip: according to Kess, when Sleidan was seeking refuge in England after the Schmalkaldic League collapsed, both Bucer and Ascham tried to assist his cause (*Sleidan*, p.64).

¹⁶³ Sowerby, *Morison*, p.217.

about another Augustinian monk who ‘denounced in violent language the doctrine of the presence’.¹⁶⁴

However, by far the most important Strasbourg reformer, certainly to Ascham, was Johannes Sturm, a Lutheran reformer and Protestant diplomat.¹⁶⁵ By all accounts, Morison had wanted to liaise regularly with Sturm, but Ascham monopolised all lines of communication.¹⁶⁶ This was a relationship forged on paper – the two never actually met. Humanism was certainly an important basis for their bond (as I discuss in chapter 5), but as important was that of religion, a dimension that has been completely overlooked by historians. The very introduction between the two of them had been first engineered by the reformer Bucer.¹⁶⁷ The letters of their long correspondence were filled with statements, observations or exhortations about Protestant reform, whether in England or Germany. For example, in Ascham’s initial letter to Sturm, he carefully reported on the auspicious (for Protestants) new religious landscape in England. With his overtly anti-Roman comment that ‘the flow of the bilgewater of Rome which has flooded the church of Christ with so much human filth is completely stopped up’, he evidently expected to strike a chord with Sturm.¹⁶⁸ In another letter, Ascham likened the Imperial Catholic presences of the Emperor Charles V and his son, Philip of Spain, to the Cerberus of Rome and Geryon of Spain.¹⁶⁹ Ascham encouraged Sturm in his work on the Lord’s Supper, a project which entailed editing a collection of Bucer’s writings on the Supper, and spurred him on to complete and disseminate his defence of Melancthon against the Catholic Staphylus.¹⁷⁰ The encouragement he gave was openly schismatic: ‘I rejoice sturdily that you have written for Philipp against Staphylus...The cause of religion has lost

¹⁶⁴ Letter to Ascham sent from Sleidan at Trent (L) G:vol.1, 138/H:128, 1552.

¹⁶⁵ For details on Sturm, see L.W. Spitz and B.S. Tinsley (eds.), *Johann Sturm on Education: the Reformation and humanist learning* (St Louis Mo., 1995). The length and frequency of Ascham’s correspondence to Sturm outweighs that to anyone else. The strength of their amity is perhaps best exemplified by the naming by Ascham of his third son ‘Sturm Ascham’ and the appointment of Sturm as his godfather (Ascham’s letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 38 / H: 221, 1562 and Sturm to Ascham (L) G:vol.2, 53/H:215, 1563).

¹⁶⁶ Sowerby, *Morison*, p.218. The reforming ideas of Sturm were already being transported into England in the late 1530s: Morison had translated one of Sturm’s staunchly anti-Catholic letters in 1538 (Sowerby, *Morison*, pp.175-6).

¹⁶⁷ Ascham’s first letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.183/V&H:39, 1550.

¹⁶⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.188/V&H:39, 1550.

¹⁶⁹ (L) G:vol.1, 110, p.229/V&H:41, 1550.

¹⁷⁰ (L) G:vol.2, 34, pp.65-66/H:206, 1562 and (L) G:vol.2, 38/H:221, 1562. Sturm edited a collection of Bucer’s writings on the Supper in a volume entitled *Nova vetera quattuor eucharista scripta*. Sturm, like Bucer, considered that the Supper constituted a spiritual communion with the body and blood of Christ which was entirely validated by faith or invalidated by lack of it: Spitz and Tinsley (eds.), *Sturm, On Education*, p.33. Friedrich Staphylus had abandoned his early loyalty to Luther and re-converted to become a prominent champion of Catholicism. His pamphlet entitled *Defensio pro trimembri theologia M. Lutheri contra aedificatores Babylonicae turris* (of 1558) which attempted to expose the lack of unity within Protestantism also attacked Melancthon.

much indeed through the deaths of Philipp (ie Melanchthon) and Bucer. But it will gain back more for certain through John Sturm's advance into its battle'.¹⁷¹ Ascham eulogized Sturm throughout his *Scholemaster*, expressly naming certain works of his. In particular, he lavished praise on Sturm's *De Institutione Principis* ('On the Education of a Prince'), carefully observing that Sturm had dedicated this to the Duke of Cleves, a Protestant prince of Germany.¹⁷²

Ascham's full engagement in the theological developments of Germany was captured in the regular reports he sent back to England. The content of these reports and their recipients suggests that Ascham considered himself to be an important conduit of the wider Protestant reform movement. In a letter to Bucer, he outlined in fulsome terms the Protestant fervour apparent in Augsburg.¹⁷³ To Edward Raven and William Ireland, former pupils from St John's and keen supporters of reform, he reported with some concern that the Catholic Emperor had banished the Protestant preachers of Augsburg.¹⁷⁴ In another letter, he described a Mass he had witnessed as a gross and lavish spectacle, writing that its participants were 'excellent to have played in tragedies'.¹⁷⁵ He also presented the Protestant worship in the German town of Augusta as a paradigm of reform. Here, according to Ascham, preachers performed their role correctly and communion of both kinds was offered to the people: 'It is so reverently and godly done that I have wished some from whom...I dissent in doctrine will say that they never saw God so honoured in their life'.¹⁷⁶ He also reported with no little glee that there were some from the Emperor's court who were 'given to God's Word; one was married here using ceremonies forbidden by the Interim and leaving out those that were commanded'.¹⁷⁷ In a letter to Cheke, Ascham extolled the dogged defence of religion put up by the cities of Hamburg, Bremen and especially Magdeburg (all Lutheran strongholds). He then also added 'when anything reliable looking either toward the State or toward religion

¹⁷¹ G:vol.2, 34, p.66/H:206, 1562. Sturm's work on the Lord's Supper was sent to both Anthony Cooke, a key political figure at the start of Elizabeth's reign, and the Queen herself. See: a letter from Elizabeth to Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 92/H:204, probably 1562, in which she thanked Sturm for his gift; and Hatch's footnote regarding Cooke.

¹⁷² *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, *passim* and p.119. Sturm's *De Institutione/Educatione Principis* was written in 1551.

¹⁷³ (L) G:vol.1, 111/H:112, 1551.

¹⁷⁴ (E) G:vol.1, 130, 1551, p.302. William Ireland, his favourite pupil, frequent bearer and recipient of Ascham's letters, became a Marian exile.

¹⁷⁵ (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, p.246.

¹⁷⁶ (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, pp.269-70.

¹⁷⁷ (E) G:vol.1, 116, 1551, p.270. The Augsburg Interim was an Imperial decree which ordered Protestants to re-adopt traditional Catholic beliefs and practices.

reaches my hands, I shall write it fully to you'.¹⁷⁸ He clearly intended that the contents of his regular dispatches from Germany be more widely disseminated, often asking the named recipient of the letter to send it on to or to contact another.¹⁷⁹ He even seemed bent on evangelising from afar. In one letter, he importunately urged Raven to encourage his contemporary Pember back in Cambridge 'to learn Christ out of Christ's own Gospel and let that *consensus ecclesiae* alone which deceives many worthy and learned wits in Cambridge and which is nothing else indeed but a privy sink to convey the dregs of papistry into all places'.¹⁸⁰

It is interesting to note that in parallel with the religious candour he evinced in these letters was a sense of wariness about discussing his religious views too openly and concerns about who might intercept them. In one of his letters describing affairs in Germany, for example, Ascham outlined for its recipient and bearer the route of a 'safe' channel for letters and demanded that it be 'burnt after reading'.¹⁸¹ At about the same time, Ascham was warned by Sturm that Ascham's position was 'among the eyes and ears of spies and listeners'. Sturm was nonetheless adamant that these risks ought not, in any way, act as an impediment to further reform, adding 'However, no injury can so greatly affect us as that we draw back from the truth of religion'.¹⁸²

Ascham wrote up his German trip towards the end of his time there in an historical essay called *A Report and Discourse of the Affaires and State of Germany and the Emperour Charles his Court during certaine yeares*.¹⁸³ In this work, history and Protestantism came together in what legitimately counted among one of the first Protestant histories of the type Sleidan, the officially appointed historian of the Schmalkaldic League, was busy composing at about the same time. Ascham's *Report* centred upon the breach between Protestant German princes from the pro-Papist Emperor, Charles V, and the overarching narrative was one which starkly divided the world into the forces of, on the one hand, papism and, on the other, Protestantism and Christ's Gospel. The work contained a considerable amount of anti-

¹⁷⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 108, p.219/V&H:34, 1550.

¹⁷⁹ Ascham's letter to Raven, (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, *passim*, is a good example.

¹⁸⁰ (E) G:vol.1, 116, p.261.

¹⁸¹ (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, pp.282, 286 and 287. Another example was his letter to Bucer (L) G:vol.1, 111/H:112, 1551.

¹⁸² Sturm to Ascham (L) G:vol.1, 125, 1551.

¹⁸³ It formed part of a very long letter to John Astley, but was left incomplete. It was first published posthumously in 1570, the same year as the *Scholemaster*, and is set out in G:vol.3.

papal rhetoric, depicted the Augsburg Interim as contrary to God's will and presented the Duke of Maurice's stance against the Catholic Council of Trent as an enlightened one. The fact it was published by John Day is further index of its distinctly Protestant tenor.¹⁸⁴

Moreover, if Ryan is correct and Ascham composed this as a work for Edward's Council, it is strong evidence for Ascham's very active role in the national and political Protestant Reformation.¹⁸⁵

So far, I have presented Ascham as a man firmly committed to the Protestant cause. That of course begs the question not just of his survival under the Marian regime but his apparent prosperity – he was appointed as Mary's Latin secretary and awarded the lease of Salisbury Hall in Waltham Forest. A common response by Reformation historians regarding reformers who were neither martyred nor exiled during the Marian years is to question the strength of their convictions. There have been various theories about what preserved Ascham, all of which probably contain some truth. Johnson, in his *Life of Ascham*, attributes pure pragmatism on the part of Mary – Ascham had previously been appointed Edward's Latin secretary and was therefore an automatic choice in a new reign where administrative matters needed to be settled swiftly; indeed, he would also be kept on in that role under Elizabeth.¹⁸⁶ Ryan astutely attributes Ascham's relatively untroubled existence to fortune.¹⁸⁷ Ascham was certainly fortunate in securing the protection of some key figures in the Marian administration, but there was also some careful calculation on his part in selecting these individuals. Someone like William Paget had already nailed his colours to the mast in the previous reign, playing a significant role in the Edwardine Protestant reform programme and, more specifically, signing the petition to put Lady Jane Grey on the throne.¹⁸⁸ Pole, Mary's new Archbishop, whom Ascham also approached, was an uncomfortable figure for any Catholic regime: he had expressed doubts about papal power and his personal belief

¹⁸⁴ John Day's printing career exemplifies a lifelong commitment to the dissemination of Protestant books and pamphlets. He won renown in particular for publishing Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, but also printed works by other well-known Protestants, including Becon, Bale, Hooper and Calvin: J.N. King, 'John Day – Master Printer of the Reformation' in P. Marshall and A. Rylie (eds.), *The Beginnings of English Protestantism* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.180-208.

¹⁸⁵ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.161.

¹⁸⁶ Johnson, *Life Ascham (Biographical Writings Johnson, ed. Fleeman, p.508).*

¹⁸⁷ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.193 and 199.

¹⁸⁸ ODNB for Paget. Others helped Ascham in this regard: Sturm had written to Paget to ask that Ascham continue as a Latin secretary: (L) G:vol.1, 157/H:144, 1553. Nannius had also commended him to Paget: Nannius letter to Ascham, (L) G:vol.1, 155/H:142, 1553.

in justification by faith had caused him problems at Trent.¹⁸⁹ Ascham was surely also attracted at some level to Pole's Greek learning, a language highly relevant to the religious Reformation.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, at the start of Mary's reign, the bulk of Ascham's incriminating writing, such as his vitriolic attacks on Pole in his *Themata Theologica*, his anti-Mass tract, the *Apologia*, his highly Protestant *Report* and his letters from Germany, were hidden away in manuscript form, or in the hands of sympathetic individuals. The diary he kept during his travels conveniently disappeared.¹⁹¹ He may have personally destroyed some of his papers and there is some evidence of him requesting the return of documents.¹⁹²

The new regime posed obvious risks for Ascham: one of his closest contemporaries, Cheke, would be forced to recant his religious views; the heads of many Cambridge colleges, including Ascham's own, were replaced with those of a more conservative outlook.¹⁹³ It is revealing to note that when Mary ascended the throne, Ascham did not immediately return to England, but lingered (supposedly) ill in Brussels, only returning in August 1553.¹⁹⁴ Many Protestants, it must be remembered, did conform. However, in his capacity as Mary's Latin secretary, Ascham, where he was able to, continued to demonstrate his Protestant allegiances.¹⁹⁵ A number of the letters he wrote during this time were in fact petitions for mercy on behalf of men and women implicated in anti-Marian or anti-Catholic episodes, such as Wyatt's rebellion and the Lady Jane Grey coup, and on behalf of William Stafford who had gone into exile in 1555 having fallen out of favour with Mary.¹⁹⁶ He also continued to tutor Elizabeth even after she had been banished in 1557 by Mary to Hatfield, a gesture which clearly indicated a full allegiance to a rival heir to the throne who would be considerably more sympathetic to Protestantism than Mary. With Pole he was able to openly

¹⁸⁹ ODNB for Pole. T.F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000), chapter on Council of Trent and later section on 'Papal Office and Reform' pp.176ff.

¹⁹⁰ J. Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Toronto, 1998), pp.111-112.

¹⁹¹ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.315.

¹⁹² Noyes, 'A Study Roger Ascham Classics', p.164. In 1553 Nannius returned a letter to him apparently 'by request': (L) G:vol.1, 155/H:142, 1553.

¹⁹³ ODNB for Cheke. The Protestant master, Thomas Lever, was replaced by the far more conservative Thomas Watson on the accession of Mary.

¹⁹⁴ ODNB.

¹⁹⁵ There is a letter to Petre dated December 1553 in which Ascham suggested he act as Mary's Latin Secretary: (L) G:vol.1, 160/H:151.

¹⁹⁶ Ascham to King Philip (L) G:vol.1, 178/H:165, 1554; (L) G:vol.1, 181/H:167, 1555; (L) G:vol.1, 176/H:163, 1554; and (L) G:vol.1, 190/H:174, 1556. In another letter of 1556, he wrote again on behalf of Elizabeth Talboys to ask for restitution of possessions ((L) G:vol.1, 180/H:173, 1556). The Stafford family generally had some claims to the throne themselves and posed a viable Protestant alternative: Garrett, C.H., *The Marian exiles: a study in the origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge, 1938), p.294-5.

sustain his deep interest in the Protestant Sturm.¹⁹⁷ It is also interesting to note his minor act of rebellion against the production of an overtly Roman Catholic narrative about Mary I's life and reign: Ascham had been assigned the task of proof-reading of Robert Wingfield's *Vita Mariae Angliae reginae*, but the quality of his checking was called into question on account of its sloppiness; this was most out of character of a man otherwise fastidious and sometimes overly fussy about details.¹⁹⁸

In fact, Ascham was not altogether immune from religious scrutiny: Sir Francis Englefield, a man Loades describes as 'one of Mary's most faithful servants', called for Ascham's writings and religious opinions to be vetted, accusing Ascham of being 'an heretic' and 'fit to be rejected and punished'.¹⁹⁹ According to Strype, what saved Ascham was an intervention by Gardiner who valued Ascham's learning highly.²⁰⁰ Had Ascham gone into exile and it was, it seems, only a quirk of fate that prevented this, he would have been, as Garrett puts it, one of an extremist minority.²⁰¹ Ryan has made some further sensitive conjectures concerning Ascham's annotations on the Ambrose text which he undertook during Mary's reign, namely about how Ascham's references to the lapses of the Jews reflected his own concerns regarding the difficulties of reconciling his own faith with service under Mary.²⁰²

Upon the accession of Elizabeth, Ascham's Protestant drive was once again in the ascendant. Retained as Latin secretary, he was now charged with conveying in his official correspondence details of a proposed pan-Protestant alliance with German princes. It was a policy that would have pleased Ascham and one in which he evidently had a high personal stake.²⁰³ Large numbers of unofficial dispatches sent from the Germans to Ascham himself during these negotiations reflected not only Ascham's full support for an alliance but his

¹⁹⁷ T.F. Mayer and C.B. Walters (eds.), *The Correspondence of Reginald Pole* (Aldershot, 2002-2008, 4 vols.), vol.4, p.28. Ascham must have been aware of the religious implications of a Sturmian allegiance and it is illuminating that in a letter to Pole, when listing those he considered to be masters of eloquence, he referred to 'the Sturm of Germany' ((L) G:vol.1, 189/H:170, 1555), but in a letter to Osorio, a Portuguese Catholic, although he included otherwise the same list, substituted the reference to Sturm with Erasmus (see notes to H:170).

¹⁹⁸ Robert Wingfield, son of Sir Humphrey (ODNB). His *Life of Mary* survives in a single manuscript (British Library, Add. MS.48093, translated by D. MacCulloch).

¹⁹⁹ D.M. Loades, *The reign of Mary Tudor: politics, government and religion in England, 1553-1558* (London, 1991), pp.18 and 24; referred to also by Ascham in a letter to the Earl of Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 75, 1566, p.129. ODNB for Englefield. Strype, *The Life of Thomas Smith*, p.50.

²⁰⁰ Strype, *Smith*, p.50.

²⁰¹ Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p.40.

²⁰² Ryan, *Ascham*, p.213.

²⁰³ Grant in his *Vita* observes that Ascham was 'very dear' to many of the German Protestants (para.24).

ability to encourage Elizabeth in this direction.²⁰⁴ Ascham also went out of his way to cultivate a close connection with Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester. The two had a close working relationship: Ascham referred to his being ‘every day in your [Leicester’s] Lordship’s chamber’ and to the offer of the Earl’s ‘gossip’ and recollected how he instructed Leicester in Latin.²⁰⁵ Ascham even named one of his sons ‘Dudley Ascham’ and made Leicester his godfather.²⁰⁶ Leicester was a well-known supporter and patron of Protestants.²⁰⁷ Sturm, for example, deliberately identified him as someone who would be favourably disposed to receiving one of his friends, Gamatius, whom Sturm described as a ‘brave and constant exile’.²⁰⁸ But Leicester was also a sounding board to those who harboured frustrations about the incompleteness of reform under Elizabeth’s watch.²⁰⁹ Zealots like Thomas Lever and James Pilkington, for example, directed their petitions to him in the mid 1560s during the vestarian controversy.²¹⁰ Ascham too seems to have shared such frustrations. Although he was always careful never to defy Elizabeth openly, the final Latin poem he dedicated to her in 1568 whilst carefully laced with compliments also contained a strong message about the need for further action.²¹¹ Using, as Ryan puts it, ‘the most unrestrained language he has left on record’, Ascham lamented the cruel persecution of Protestant believers wherever the Pope holds sway. He referred, with sorrow, to these ‘persecuted neighbours’ with whom, according to Ascham, ‘religious flesh, the compacts of Christ, one faith, one salvation and dreadful dangers conjoin us’.²¹² He then devoted the majority of this long poem to a detailed and highly acerbic vilification of the Pope using the imagery of pagan monsters and the most visceral adjectives he could muster. The wording at the end of the piece was highly equivocal and loaded: in harnessing the language of hope,

²⁰⁴ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.227.

²⁰⁵ Ascham letter to Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 59, 1664. Leicester was taught together with the princess Elizabeth: A.N. Wilson, *The Elizabethans* (London, 2011), p.48. ‘Gossip’ in this period often denoted the post of godparent – see below.

²⁰⁶ Letter to Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 75, 1566.

²⁰⁷ S. Adams, *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester, 2002), p.228.

²⁰⁸ Sturm to Ascham (L) G:vol.2, 88/H:228, 1564 and Sturm to Cooke (L) G:vol.2, 89/H:229, 1564.

²⁰⁹ P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Clarendon, 1990), p.25; P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), p.1; and D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999), p.213.

²¹⁰ ODNB for Lever and Pilkington. Ascham considered the Pilkington brothers (Leonard and James) part of his close circle: in a letter to Ireland of 1548, for example, Ascham sent his greetings to a number of Johnians, including the Pilkington brothers: (L) G:vol.1, 90/V&H:30.

²¹¹ The poem is printed in G:vol.3, pp.288-293. It was never actually delivered to Elizabeth, almost certainly on account of the fact that he would fall fatally ill before he managed to complete it. Freeman and Doran discuss the close relationship between criticism and praise in works addressed to the Queen: S. Doran and T.S. Freeman (eds.), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke, 2003).

²¹² Ryan, *Ascham*, p.247.

hope that this poem would move Elizabeth not to sadness, but anger and action, Ascham was, in effect, giving a warning to his monarch about the urgency of the religious situation.

It was also during this time that Ascham undertook one of the most significantly religious projects of his life, his *Scholemaster*. As the full title suggests, this comprised ‘a plaine and perfite way of teachyng children to understand, write and speake in Latin tong’ through imitation of the best of the ancients. This work, however, constituted considerably more than some niche educational thesis. To begin with, the work was presented together with the commentaries of Peter Martyr, Italian theologian and Protestant reformer, on two books of Samuel, and so was packaged within a reforming context.²¹³ The preface, which rooted the enterprise in a discussion that took place in Windsor Castle in the company of the most powerful men of the realm, including Cecil, Elizabeth’s chief advisor, Petre, secretary of State, Richard Sackville, treasurer of the Exchequer, Astley, and Walter Mildmay, chancellor of the Exchequer, established the work as one inherently bound up with national and commonwealth concerns.²¹⁴ Its function as a guide to mimesis fed directly into a concern for religion and its reform.²¹⁵ It was a work that had at its core a salvific purpose, catechistic character and an apocalyptic urgency both to advance the idiom and the cause of English Protestantism and to disassociate England from Rome theologically and philosophically.²¹⁶ In book 1, Ascham included a blunt warning about the sin of man and the saving power of the Word:

These misorders be God’s just plagues...brought justly upon us for our sins, which be infinite in number and horrible in deed,...we have had in so few years the candle of God’s word so oft lightened, so oft put out; and yet will venture again by our unthankfulness in doctrine and sinful life to leese again light, candle, candlestick and all...[may] God graft in us the true knowledge of his Word...and then shall he preserve us by grace from all manner of terrible days.²¹⁷

He referred regularly to the detrimental effect of papists, to ‘open papists abroad’ who ‘could not turn English men from the truth’ and then to the more insidious types, ‘the subtle papists

²¹³ See the dedication to Elizabeth of the *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.65-75.

²¹⁴ F. Schurink, ‘The intimacy of manuscript and the pleasure of print: literary culture from the Schoolmaster to Euphues’ in C. Shrank and M. Pincombe (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook to Tudor Literature* (Oxford, 2009), pp.674-6.

²¹⁵ As King comments, mimetic theory was wholly relevant to the Reformation: in opposition to the artistic externalization of religious feelings, Protestant subjectivity now demanded inner faith predicated on spiritual understanding: J.N. King, *English Reformation Literature: the Tudor origins of the Protestant tradition* (Princeton N.J. and Guildford, 1982), p.17.

²¹⁶ Stark, ‘Protestant Theology and Apocalyptic Rhetoric in Ascham’s *Scholemaster*’, pp.517-532.

²¹⁷ Ascham, *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.128-129.

at home'.²¹⁸ Some comments were even more specific in nature, pointing to an ongoing opposition to the Mass and to his disapproval of clerical vestments.²¹⁹ He closed both his preface and book 1 with the explicit statement that his work was concerned with nothing less than 'the advancement of truth in religion and honesty of living'.²²⁰

Interestingly, even in a reign more congenial to Ascham, religious difference, it appears, still caused difficulties. Ascham's political ambitions had led him, in 1562/3, to stand as a Member of Parliament for Preston in Lancashire.²²¹ He had high-level backing, nominated by Sir Ambrose Cave, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a kinsman of Cecil and on close terms with Lord Robert Dudley.²²² But, quite suddenly, the posting came to an end. No historian has explored the reasons why, after only one parliamentary sitting, a man called Hodgkinson was returned for Preston in 1563 instead of Ascham.²²³ Evidence points to the ousting of Ascham on religious grounds by the third Earl of Derby, Edward Stanley, a known opponent to the Protestant cause. The Earl certainly had influence and had, for instance, engineered the return of another member for Preston.²²⁴ He was also not afraid to take a stand in the name of religion: during Edward's reign he repeatedly opposed legislation of a Protestant tendency, including that which entailed clerical reform.²²⁵ Under Elizabeth, he harboured the papal agent Nicholas Morton and rallied northern rebels in 1569.²²⁶ Ascham and Ambrose Cave were, by contrast, committed Protestants.²²⁷ Preston was a known conservative hub and the Earl almost certainly took advantage of that in order to make a religious point.²²⁸ The episode further reinforces the fact that Ascham's Protestantism was not simply a private and inward matter, but of public and political consequence.

By way of an aside, there are a couple of additional clues as to Ascham's religious sympathies. One was his clear preference to marry. A considerable portion of Ascham's

²¹⁸ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.159.

²¹⁹ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.144-6 and 237.

²²⁰ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.86 and 167.

²²¹ W. Dobson, *History of the Parliamentary Representation of Preston* (Preston and London, 1856), p.11. Ascham's motives must have been political rather than financial; no members of Parliament were paid: History of Parliament at <http://www.histparl.ac.uk> (last accessed Autumn 2013).

²²² History of Parliament for Preston; ODNB for Ambrose Cave.

²²³ History of Parliament for Preston.

²²⁴ A man named Gilbert Morton (History of Parliament).

²²⁵ ODNB for Earl of Derby.

²²⁶ ODNB for Earl of Derby.

²²⁷ ODNB for Ambrose Cave: he had, for example, served on all the commissions to eliminate papists from positions of power and preventing them attending the Mass.

²²⁸ C. Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975).

correspondence was spent discussing various marriage plans. Having proposed (unsuccessfully) in 1550 to one woman, he then became embroiled, this time with greater success, in a competitive courtship for the hand of Margaret Howe. Had he been a priest, which, as we have seen, was more or less expected of him at University, his marriage to Margaret would not have been possible: they married in 1554 at precisely the time when the Edwardine legalisation of the marriage of priests (1549) had been reversed by Mary.²²⁹ The other clue is Ascham's beard. The majority of available images for Ascham, the Gutenberg Project portrait, the 1703 Burghers frontispiece and the wooden engraving in the Old Library of St John's, all show him with a noticeably long and shaggy beard.²³⁰ In the context of the Reformation, beards represented an aggressive anti-Catholic gesture, the clean-shaven appearance having been the norm for late medieval priesthood. Luther provided the precedent.²³¹ In his *Apologia*, Ascham would be openly dismissive of shaven priests.²³²

A final indication of the advanced state of Ascham's religious views at the end of his life was the presence at Ascham's deathbed in 1568 of Alexander Nowell who also delivered Ascham's commemorative address at St Paul's Cross.²³³ Nowell was a notoriously zealous Protestant Strasbourg exile and subsequent Dean of St Paul's (too radical, according to Lehmberg, for the Elizabethan episcopacy), a man who was pushing in a distinctly Calvinistic direction and belonged to the vanguard of the Puritan movement.²³⁴ Others whose funeral sermons Nowell would preach included William Grindal, a fellow Strasbourg exile and puritanical Elizabethan bishop, and Cecil's wife, Lady Mildred Burghley.²³⁵ Whether Ascham requested Nowell or whether Nowell felt drawn to Ascham we do not know, but this deathbed partnership will have certainly had a religious basis. Ascham was buried in St Sepulchre-without-Newgate Church in the City of London where he had worshipped as a

²²⁹ This was enacted in the December Parliament of 1553.

²³⁰ The provenance and date of the Gutenberg project are not clear. The Burghers portrait is found in an early edition of Ascham's letters: *Rogeri Aschami Epistolarum, libri quatuor*, ed., W. Elstob (Oxford, 1703). The Old Library engraving was formerly one of a series from the walls of an old house in Southampton and given to the college by Henry Gaselee in 1904. A modern likeness of Ascham from the 1860s to be found on the side of St John's College Chapel, by contrast, shows him clean-shaven.

²³¹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.361.

²³² *Apologia*, pp.71 and 104.

²³³ ODNB for Nowell. Grant, *Vita*, paras. 41-43.

²³⁴ ODNB for Nowell; MacCulloch, 'Sixteenth-century English Protestantism', p.13; Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p.237; and Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p.69.

²³⁵ ODNB for Nowell.

parishioner during his time in London.²³⁶ This was the church whose vicar, John Rogers, was burned as a heretic in 1555 during Mary's reign.

1.3 Anticlericalism

To the extent that Ascham was a religious thinker, he was also an anticlerical.²³⁷ In his *Apologia* he would be highly critical of the pre-Reformation clergy, especially priests, their lack of learning and unquestioning obedience to what Ascham considered to be a corrupt faith. Anticlericalism is a prejudice that historians of Ascham have never really identified or discussed, perhaps because it emerges with most force in his relatively unknown *Apologia*. However, it is perfectly possible to detect a number of episodes in his life in which this antipathy made itself felt. We can also identify specific contexts in which it germinated and developed. This is a survey that is personal to Ascham, but which could, in theory, apply to others.

Cambridge University was an important arena in which anticlericalism was nurtured. It was, to a large extent, fomented by the officially sponsored anticlericalism of Henry VIII's programme of Church reform. From first arrival in Cambridge, Ascham experienced political anticlericalism in action. The University was an immensely important limb of the Church and, as such, represented a natural target for a King and government keen to curb ecclesiastical power. Dissolution of monasteries took place all over England between 1536 and 1540 and the University and colleges were also threatened. Royal Injunctions of 1535 issued by Cromwell which had required the University to send an exact inventory of land and rentals to the King were just one example of the threat that hung over Cambridge.²³⁸ Traditional canon law of the Church was rejected in favour of Scripture and classical texts.²³⁹ Moreover, the appointment of Cromwell, a layman and notorious despoiler of the Catholic Church, to the chancellorship of the University in the place of an Archbishop of Canterbury symbolised the consolidation of royal control.

Ascham took seriously and welcomed this confrontation of the Church by government. Expressions of Erastianism that featured in a number of Ascham's earlier works can and should be viewed as anticlerical in nature. In his poems to Henry and Edward, he repeatedly

²³⁶ A plaque displayed in the church advertises Ascham's burial there.

²³⁷ See chapter 4 for a review of the historiography of anticlericalism.

²³⁸ Leader, *History Cambridge*, p. 334.

²³⁹ Thomas Cromwell's Injunctions for the University of 1535.

endorsed the monarch as the Head of the Church, next only to Christ. About Henry he wrote: ‘After Christ, there is a no more sacred power on earth /worthy for the sad human race to see.../Your power is Christ, each separate matter is Christ for you/Christ resides in the sword and in your speech./And so, may you live long as the ornament and guardian of the name of Britain and may you live long as ruler, defence of our soil...’.²⁴⁰ In his *Themata*, which he composed towards the end of Henry’s reign, he emphasized again his belief that the monarch (not the Church) was God’s vice-gerent and that service to God and the Christian State were in practice inseparable. He stated categorically that ‘All Churches of which the heads are kings after Christ bring forward not their own but the decrees of Christ. For there is no power unless it is in God and what decrees there are have been ordained by God...Therefore, the decrees of those who rule and of the Church are included among the prescriptions of God’.²⁴¹

A further manifestation of official anticlericalism that Ascham would digest and manipulate was a marked increase in promotions of University laymen trained in humanist learning to posts previously reserved for the clergy.²⁴² A wonderfully mordant passage in Ascham’s *Toxophilus*, which was dedicated to the King, seemed to vindicate precisely this development. He described in a most explicit way the misguided training of many boys as ministers who were simply not fit for that path and ‘were fitter to be clerks’.²⁴³ He poured scorn on the way fathers pushed their sons into education in order to become priests even though those sons were both physically and intellectually impaired:

if a man nowadays have two sons, the one impotent and weak, sickly, lisping, stuttering and stammering or having any mis-shape in his body, what doth the father of such one commonly say? This boy is fit for nothing else but to set to learning and make a priest of; ...[as if] the outcasts of the world, having neither countenance, tongue, nor wit (for of a perverse body cometh commonly a perverse mind), be good enough to make those men of which shall be appointed to preach God’s holy Word and minister his blessed sacraments...This perverse judgement of fathers...causeth the commonwealth to have many unfit ministers.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ G:vol.3, pp.277-278.

²⁴¹ *Themata*, p.196; Ryan, *Ascham*, p.100.

²⁴² R. Rex, ‘The Role of English Humanists in the Reformation up to 1559’ in N. Scott Amos, A. Pettegree and H.F.K. von Nierop (eds.), *The Education of a Christian Society: humanism and reformation in Britain and the Netherlands* (Aldershot, 1999), p.26; W.H. Hudson, *Cambridge Connection and Elizabethan settlement of 1559* (Durham N.C., 1980), p.81.

²⁴³ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, p.150.

²⁴⁴ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, pp.150-151. This was not dissimilar to a view expressed by Tyndale in his *Answer to Sir Thomas More’s Dialogue*, where he criticised the compulsion exercised by parents on their children to become priests of the Pope, as quoted in P. Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford, 1994), p.111.

Ascham's feelings on this matter, it seems, grew and two years later he expressed his hopes that some sort of official action would be taken against priests present in the University who had no form of scholarship. In a letter to Denny, he referred to the 'very just punishment of the ignorance of evil priests' and to Astley, he wrote: 'The priests here hope for the death of learning because they are despised by it; as if they ever had any commerce with learning! Nay what more splendid hope can ever be proposed for learning than when the ignorance of these men be most justly castigated?'²⁴⁵ His low opinion of clerical learning was also on display in his *Scholemaster*: in a section which described the resumption of his lessons with Elizabeth, he wrote pointedly: '...she readeth here now at Windsor more Greek every day than some prebendary of this church doth read Latin in a whole week'.²⁴⁶

Another important indication of Ascham's anticlericalism was his lay status. Despite his attendance at St John's College, an institution which was fundamentally religious and where the taking of orders was expected, Ascham actively chose to remain a layman. To do so was not an obvious path to take at this University, particularly as one became more senior, and numbers of laymen holding office in the University and colleges were significantly lower than those of clerical status.²⁴⁷ It also acted as a barrier to promotion at senior level. Having been appointed Public Orator, Ascham was very much in line for the mastership of John's, there being a well-established path of promotion from Public Orator to college master.²⁴⁸ Indeed, Ascham himself appears to have been a sort of acting master of the college for a short spell in 1547 during William Bill's absence.²⁴⁹ However, Henrician Statutes stipulated that a master of a college must be a priest trained in theology.²⁵⁰ The fact that Ascham was prepared to forgo possible candidature for the mastership of his beloved college St John's and other lofty offices simply on account of not having holy orders makes his decision not to take them all the more marked.

²⁴⁵ (L) G:vol.1, 73 /V&H:24, 1547; and (L) G:vol.1, 55/H:66, 1547.

²⁴⁶ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.143.

²⁴⁷ V. Morgan, *History University Cambridge*, p.25.

²⁴⁸ George Day, for example, had become master of St John's after his tenure in that post.

²⁴⁹ As I discuss in chapter 2.

²⁵⁰ Mayor, *Statutes*, p.5. A survey of the St John's College masters from the inception of the college to the start of Elizabeth's reign indicates that this requirement was fulfilled without exception – see: ODNBs for Metcalfe, Day, Taylor, Bill, Lever, Watson, Bullock, and the Pilkington brothers; as regards the first two masters, Shorton and Percy, see N. Cantalupe and Rev. R. Parker (eds.), *The History and Antiquities of the Universti of Cambridge* (London, 1721), p.130.

Yet more significant was Ascham's overt avoidance of ecclesiastical posts. When offered a prebend of a cathedral in 1553 by Petre at the beginning of Mary's reign, Ascham turned it down on the grounds that he was a layman, despite the fact that at the time he was desperate for money and Petre evidently did not consider his lay status to be a particular issue.²⁵¹ He deliberately stressed that his services belonged to 'civil jurisdiction and not ecclesiastical', making the same point to Gardiner in a separate letter, and was adamant that he could not fulfil the duty of a prebend.²⁵² In 1559 Ascham, as it happens, did agree to accept a nomination to the canonry and prebend of Wetwang in Yorkshire. Cecil had arranged to bestow the prebend as a favour; it was a lucrative sinecure. Ascham agreed, probably owing to a more congenial religious climate under Elizabeth and the fact he was now supporting a family.²⁵³ However, even this episode elicited Ascham's anticlericalism. A dispute over whether Ascham should be a recipient arose and Ascham did not gain legal rights to it till 1566. The new incumbent to the Archbishopric of York, Thomas Young, it appears, had blocked Ascham's appointment.²⁵⁴ Ascham, in response, lobbied Leicester and it is very illuminating to note the way in which Ascham deliberately played the layman Leicester off against the Bishop in his letters. He wrote, for example, that he looked 'for no good' from the Bishop, but rather 'referred the whole matter only to your lordship'.²⁵⁵ He also used it as an opportunity to make some pretty damning and *ad hominem* remarks about this Archbishop, criticizing him for 'never yet having spent one penny in the right of his patronage' and suggesting that he made no account of 'learning, conscience, humanity or courtesy'.²⁵⁶ Ascham here was reproaching a very senior member of the Church for not fulfilling his duties, for his greed and his lack of interest in learning.

One important reason for Ascham for his self-identification with the laity seems to have been a principled objection to the acquisition of money in a spiritual office.²⁵⁷ In a letter to Cecil, Ascham made a point of registering his dislike 'of those who will catch what they can, be it benefice, prebend or what else though they be neither able or willing to discharge it' and in another to Gardiner, where he again discussed his rejection of Petre's offer of a prebend, he

²⁵¹ Ascham letter to Petre (E) G:vol.1, 163, 1553.

²⁵² (E) G:vol.1, 163, 1553 and letter to Gardiner (E) G:vol.1, 167, 1554, pp.406-407.

²⁵³ Ryan offers these two suggestions (*Ascham*, pp.235-6).

²⁵⁴ Ascham letter to Cecil (E) G:vol.2, 27, 1561.

²⁵⁵ Ascham letter to Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 75, 1566, p.131.

²⁵⁶ Ascham letter to Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 75, 1566, p.130.

²⁵⁷ According to Haigh, a common basis for discontent among the laity was the wealth of the Church and some clergy: C. Haigh, *English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge, 1987), p.59.

indicated that he would prefer poverty over unprincipled ecclesiastical office, writing that he would not be so ‘greedy in this kind of life to receive them, but had rather live by duty under order in any poor estate than with catching with both sides enrich myself with disorder’.²⁵⁸

Ascham’s disapprobation of Archbishop Young was very probably tied up with the fact that he was a non-preaching bishop and throughout his life profited financially from clerical office.²⁵⁹ Elsewhere, one can infer other expressions of concern he had about the potential of power of money to corrupt: in one of his books, a copy of eleven comedies of Aristophanes, the most heavily annotated play was the *Ploutos* (‘The Wealth’) which contained the margin note: *omnia obediunt pecuniae* (‘everything obeys money’).²⁶⁰ In addition, in his poem to Queen Elizabeth, there was a noticeable emphasis on gold, for example: ‘Gold destroys or weakens or will divide/...it throws all into confusion/ it mingles public times with anxious cares/it destroys every good joy of a private life/and it fills up the hearts of many with calamities’.²⁶¹

A final context of Ascham’s life in which a negative attitude towards the clergy may have been stoked was the Law. There is evidence that Ascham was a member of one of the Inns of Court. A ‘Roger Askam’ is listed among those admitted to the lodges of Middle Temple between 1524/5 and 1550/1.²⁶² Certainly his *Apologia* was distinctly legal in its configuration and approach, suggesting that Ascham had, at some point, experienced the legal profession.²⁶³ It has been long recognised that legal and clerical remits did not tend to overlap and indeed deep-seated feuds often existed between clergy and lawyers.²⁶⁴ Seymour Baker House, for example, has attested to the Inns of Court as a key staging venue for anticlerical and anti-papal plays.²⁶⁵ A concern for the Law had also possibly rubbed off on Ascham during his time at the Wingfield home in Sussex where he had been schooled. The head of the house, Sir Humphrey Wingfield, had trained as a lawyer at Gray’s Inn and, during

²⁵⁸ Ascham letter to Cecil (E) G:vol.1, 143, 1552, p.343; and to Gardiner (E) G:vol.1, 167, 1554, pp.406-7.

²⁵⁹ ODNB for Young.

²⁶⁰ Ascham’s annotations on Aristophanes, *Comoediae undecim* (Basel, 1532), held at Hatfield House (archive number 7923).

²⁶¹ G:vol.3, p.293.

²⁶² *The Register of Admissions to the Honorable Society of the Middle Temple*, eds., H.F. MacGeagh and H.A.C. Sturges (London, 1549); and *A Calendar of the Middle Temple Records*, ed. C.H. Hopwood (London, 1903). Unfortunately the volume containing the records for the years of Ascham’s membership has been lost for a long time which means that it is not possible to narrow down his precise date of admission, but records do show that he was still there in 1554.

²⁶³ See chapter 4.

²⁶⁴ For example, in Cambridge University there were strict stipulations that a man who wished to practise law in church courts had to be a layman: Morgan, *History University Cambridge*, p.25.

²⁶⁵ S. Baker House, ‘Literature, Drama and Politics’ in D. MacCulloch (ed.), *The Reign of Henry VIII* (Basingstoke and London, 1995), pp. 183-185.

his long career, had been a Justice of the Peace for Suffolk and attorney to Charles Brandon.²⁶⁶ He had also presided over the trenchantly anticlerical Reformation Parliament of 1529 in which one of the major grounds for complaint in the first session was that ‘...ignorant priests were holding 10 to 12 benefices and great scholars sat in poverty at Oxford and Cambridge’.²⁶⁷ It is not unreasonable to suppose that Ascham was deeply affected by all this. Ascham’s anticlerical prejudice was an important dimension of his general outlook and must be acknowledged if we are to reach a full understanding of his theology and his theological approach.

1.4 Humanism, Classics and Religion

It is against this religiously and theologically oriented version of Ascham’s life that his humanism and classical studies must be considered. In the world he inhabited humanism, classics and religion were not unconnected spheres; they all overlapped to a high degree and were mutually reinforcing. Their fusion formed the bedrock of Ascham’s theological work, the *Apologia*, and it is therefore imperative that the nature of their interaction throughout his whole existence be properly understood.

Ascham’s entire humanist education was delivered within a highly religious packaging. From a young age, Ascham was exposed to the classical languages. He began to learn Latin at his local grammar school and, not long afterwards, was moved to a private school in Suffolk run by Humphrey Wingfield which was, by all accounts, a centre of excellence in classical learning. Here Ascham’s existing foundations in Latin were reinforced and his learning of Greek nurtured under the tutelage of a Cambridge-educated tutor named Robert Bond.²⁶⁸ What has not been formerly made more explicit is the fact that this tutor was also a priest who would go on to be the chaplain to Henry VIII.²⁶⁹ One can only speculate on the extent to which Ascham’s early classical training (up to the age of 15) was embedded within a religious framework. The same was definitely true of his study of the BA and MA arts courses at St John’s. Here the study of the *studia humanitatis* was a fundamental element in the overarching mission of this theological college, one of the main aims of which was to

²⁶⁶ J.M. Wingfield, *Some Records of the Wingfield Family* (London, 1925) p. 227.

²⁶⁷ S. Lehmborg, *The Reformation Parliament 1529-1536* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 83. D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors* (Oxford, 1986), pp.146-147.

²⁶⁸ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.12; and MacCulloch, *Suffolk Tudors*, p.147.

²⁶⁹ MacCulloch, *Suffolk Tudors*, p.417; Wingfield, *Records of the Wingfield Family*, p.232.

produce excellently trained churchmen.²⁷⁰ The ancient tongues also formed a vital part of the sacred constitution and the theological orientation of the college. The founding statutes of this theological powerhouse stipulated that all communications at all times be conducted in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.²⁷¹ These languages were effectively being endowed with a special status; they were the languages of theology and the *studia humanitatis*, the passport to a life as theologian.

It was clear early on that Ascham had a genuine gift for classical scholarship.²⁷² In his pursuit of the subjects of Latin and Greek, he was at the cutting-edge, charting new and exciting waters and often, it seems, dictating the pace when it came to their promotion. He was one of the first at the college to lecture in Greek after Richard Croke's initial lectureship in Greek and prior to a professorship for that subject being created by Henry VIII in 1540. One of the areas he concentrated on in these lectures was the rhetoric of the Greek orators and, more especially, Isocrates.²⁷³ In choosing Isocrates, Ascham was anticipating (or possibly influencing) the Henrician Statutes of 1545.²⁷⁴ Letters make it clear that Ascham during his time in Cambridge also embarked upon several difficult and enterprising classical projects such as a verse translation of Sophocles' *Philoctetes* into Latin from Greek in imitation of Seneca²⁷⁵, and a translation of Herodotus which, had it survived, would have been the first translation in England of this 'Father of Greek History'.²⁷⁶ He also requested to borrow the very rare classical writer Hermogenes with a view, perhaps, to undertaking some scholarly exposition.²⁷⁷ Additional evidence that he was working with first editions and at the forefront of early Greek scholarship is his autograph (in Greek) which appears on a first edition of the Juntine Orpheus of 1500.²⁷⁸

In addition to the expertise he developed, Ascham attached a high ideological significance to the ancient tongues. A good example of this revolved around the well-documented quarrel

²⁷⁰ See Underwood's survey of the truly innovative academic programme established by Fisher for the college ('John Fisher and promotion of learning', pp.25-41).

²⁷¹ As stipulated in the 1524 statutes and later Henrician statutes for the college (Mayor, *Statutes*).

²⁷² A letter from Pember, Ascham's college tutor, for instance, praised his aptitude in Greek and commented on his superiority over others, (L) H:1, 1534.

²⁷³ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.25-26.

²⁷⁴ Mayor, *Statutes*, p.251: these stipulated that a Greek lecturer must lecture daily in Plato, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Xenophon or other author of note.

²⁷⁵ And in doing so, according to Ryan, anticipated the Elizabethan predilection for Seneca (*Ascham*, p.30).

²⁷⁶ Ascham letter to Grindal (L) G:vol.1, 30/H:32, 1545 and Hatch's footnote to letter H:30.

²⁷⁷ Ascham letter to a friend (L) G:vol.1, 17, 1543/H:6, 1539.

²⁷⁸ Ionides Collection of Greek Classics in Yale University Library.

that erupted in the University over the correct pronunciation of Greek. Correspondence reflects Ascham's full involvement in this public and explosive disagreement. He referred to the issue of Greek's delivery in personal and highly principled terms, protesting that the University authorities under Gardiner's direction had: '...forcibly deprived us of that pronunciation which was...the salve of learning and utterly extinguished practically all the fire we had for learning the Greek language...', referring to it proprietorially as 'our pronunciation'.²⁷⁹ So strong were his feelings about the pronunciation of Greek that, even as late as 1553, Ascham was challenging Heidelberg humanists to dispute the matter with him, a matter which he claimed went to the heart of 'the truest religion of Christ itself'.²⁸⁰ What was at stake in such conflicts was not benign scholarly pig-headedness, but the integrity of a vital theological medium. Within the context of the intellectual Reformation it was part of a larger battle over control of University and indeed England.²⁸¹

Ideologically too, the ancient languages were, in Ascham's eyes, the best route to true knowledge and wisdom. In a number of the books Ascham owned he had carefully inscribed, by hand, the following Greek 'tag': *ean ēs philomēthēs esē polumathēs* ('If you are a lover of learning, you will be a great scholar'). It was a motto that captured nicely his faith in the Greek tongue.²⁸² The languages of Latin and Greek also possessed qualities that he believed overlapped with religion. In his last work, the *Scholemaster*, he described Greek as a language which contained 'wisdom and eloquence, good matters and right judgement in doctrine...always proper in words, most apt in sentence, most plain and pure in uttering the same'.²⁸³ He even linked the ancient languages to the divine plane, identifying Latin and Greek as the only two languages that 'the providence of God has left to mortals'.²⁸⁴

A sense of brotherhood among those pursuing classical studies was another important element in their conception as a spiritual matter. It is revealing that in a number of Ascham's books the ownership inscriptions (in Greek) were 'Ascham and his friends' as though the

²⁷⁹ Ascham letters to: Brandisby (L) G:vol.1, 12/V&H 2, post 1542; and to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 108/V&H:34, 1550.

²⁸⁰ Ascham letter to Hubert Leodius (L) G:vol.1, 144/H:131, 1553; and from Hubert to Ascham (L) G:vol.1, 154/H:141, 1553.

²⁸¹ S. Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek? Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism* (Cambridge, 2002), p.58.

²⁸² This appears in the front cover of his Greek New Testament and his edition of Aristophanes plays (both referred to above). It was also used (in Greek) in his *Scholemaster* (G:vol.3, p.109). It derives from Isocrates.

²⁸³ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.211.

²⁸⁴ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.239.

reading of the pagan authors was viewed as a shared experience.²⁸⁵ However, the study and the teaching of Greek was about so much more than simply friendship. It entailed a collective mission. A Greek dictionary presented by Cheke to Ascham referred in the inscription to the ‘utility’ that comes from friendship and the learning they cherished.²⁸⁶ Ascham described the study of Greek literature with all the zeal of someone proselytizing. In a letter of *circa* 1542/3 to Richard Brandisby, former student, college fellow and friend, he detailed, in the most effusive terms, the Greek literature currently being studied at the college:

Aristotle and Plato are now being read in their own language by the boys, something we have been doing amongst us for five years. Sophocles and Euripides are now better known here;...Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon are now more on our lips and in our hands...The boys have more copies of Isocrates in their hands...our Cheke’s effort and example has lit and fed this flame of literary zeal.²⁸⁷

Additionally, it is possible to perceive the deep and personal resonance that the medium of the ancient languages held for Ascham. A wonderfully vivid and tangible example of this is a book of Callimachus’ *Hymns*, together with a collection of sayings (*sententiae*) of the ancients, in which a large number of notes appear in Ascham’s ‘large and beautiful hand’.²⁸⁸ This text (which has not to my knowledge been mentioned in any historical work about Ascham), published in Basel in 1532, was given to Westminster School in the 1586 by Lady Burghley and is held in their archives. It is not clear when Ascham read this text and applied his annotations,²⁸⁹ but the vast majority of the *sententiae* that appear to have caught his attention deal with age, medical care and wealth (and its inverse, poverty). It is tempting to wonder whether Ascham in fact made these notes in the immediate aftermath of a debilitating and serious bout of quartan fever which was so serious he was forced to be away from Cambridge for most of 1540-1 and recover in Yorkshire with his parents.²⁹⁰ If so, what these ancient sentiments provided Ascham with was the sort of solace, comfort and emotional connection religion usually brings others. Elsewhere, one even gets a sense of the spiritual

²⁸⁵ This includes copies of his Greek New Testament and his Isocrates *Orations* held at Hatfield House.

²⁸⁶ Hesychius’ Greek Dictionary (1521). The original inscription is held in St John’s College archives.

²⁸⁷ (L) G:vol.1, 12/V&H:2, post 1542.

²⁸⁸ These are the words of the nineteenth century cataloguer. Ascham’s name is clearly marked on the first page.

²⁸⁹ Ascham does mention Callimachus in his *Toxophilus* of 1544/5, G:vol.2, p.26. There is also the question of where Ascham got this book from: book inventories show that copies of this Callimachus edition were available in Cambridge at that time: one was left in a will by a fellow of St Catharine’s College in 1539; another in a will of a student and fellow of St John’s College, Miles Buckley d.1559: E. Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories* (Cambridge, 1986).

²⁹⁰ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.32-33

profitability that Ascham viewed classical literature possessed.²⁹¹ In a letter of support to Bishop Goodrich who had fallen very ill, he referred to Plato and Tully (Cicero) ‘as medicine of the mind’, adding ‘yet seeing they were able to heal heathen men in like troubles, it were a shame they should not heal us Christians in like manner’.²⁹² In a letter to Astley in which Ascham enclosed a copy of Cicero’s *De Officiis* together with writings of Jerome and Augustine, he drew attention to the salvific qualities of Cicero:

In these books not some shadowy simulachrum is sketched, but the true and trusty image of godliness is expressed, so cohering and bound up with the religion of Jesus Christ himself that if eternal salvation is not sought here at least the whole course of our life which we devote to the same goal will be run much more easily and readily and less hindered by reading them.²⁹³

When it came to making a choice about academic specialisation after his undergraduate degree, Ascham made the conscious decision to continue with the arts even though it was quite usual that many of those who had initially excelled in the classical languages would then proceed to pursue a degree in theology. John Redman, for example, a leading classicist in the college, was subsequently appointed a professor in theology and would serve as a royal chaplain to Henry VIII. Thomas Watson, another fine classical scholar from John’s who translated the entire *Odyssey* from Greek and wrote a tragedy in Latin, would go on to gain a degree in theology, serve as chaplain to Gardiner and eventually become Bishop of Lincoln. That did not, however, mean that in practice theology had no relevance for Ascham’s classical research; there was a high degree of interplay between theological and arts faculties, formal enrolment in the faculty of theology not being a necessary precondition for an ecclesiastical career.²⁹⁴ Furthermore, the choice of classics did not necessarily entail an eschewal of the theological. Certainly, as far as Ascham was concerned, a full combination of the two was perfectly possible. He seemed to conceive of his fellowship in classics in almost religious terms.²⁹⁵ In a letter of *circa* 1540, Ascham referred to his fellowship with the Greek word *bioteumatos* which means ‘a manner of life’, as though it were akin to a kind of religious living.²⁹⁶

²⁹¹ Moore mounts a compelling argument about the ‘spiritual profit’ humanism could offer, serving, in effect, as a religious ‘cure’: ‘Gathering Fruit: The “Profitable” Translations of Thomas Paynell’ in Schurink (ed.) *Tudor Translation*, p.43.

²⁹² (E) G:vol.2, 10, 1559, p.21.

²⁹³ (L) G:vol.1, 45/V&H:16, 1545.

²⁹⁴ Leader, *History Cambridge*, p.172.

²⁹⁵ Ryan admits that Ascham’s humanism assumed an increasingly religious character (*Ascham*, p.242).

²⁹⁶ Letter to Cordingly, a senior member of St John’s, (L) G:vol.1, 6/H:8, 1539.

An important aspect of his role as college fellow was the tuition of undergraduates in classics, a duty which Ascham took very seriously, again, treating it as an essentially religious function. Some of his most touching correspondence revolved around his favourite pupils, such as Grindal, Ireland and Raven, for whom he would devise courses of reading which featured chiefly Cicero, Plato and orations of Chrysostom, explaining that he wanted them, as though in the manner of religious acolytes, ‘to drink piety along with their learning’.²⁹⁷ Ascham certainly seems to have viewed his own pedagogical activities as inherently religious, referring to himself, *qua* teacher of Elizabeth, as a ‘minister’: ‘Amongst all the benefits that God hath blessed me withal, next the knowledge of Christ’s true religion, I count this the greatest, that it pleased God to call me to be one poor minister in setting forward these excellent gifts of learning in this most excellent prince’.²⁹⁸ The exclusivity of classical erudition that his teaching could foster he referred to in essentially predestinarian terms: ‘But that learning which furnisheth the mind with judgement, the tongue with utterance, is not [im]parted from any man to any other living thing, except only to God himself, and yet is not granted to all men, but to the fewest, and such as be more than men among men’.²⁹⁹ Another post which involved the utilisation of Latin, his role as Latin Secretary, he also seems to have viewed as an ecclesiastical office, writing ‘which post [viz. Latin Secretary] I would not change for anything else you could propose even though I had the free choice of a living’.³⁰⁰

Ultimately, the full integration of humanist study into the theological could provide its own self-sustaining religious existence. In what amounted to a declaration of a Christian way of life, he wrote in 1543/4 to Redman that: ‘I have planned my way of life and termination of my studies; and to what nightly meditations have I devoted myself?...to the examination of God’s Word attended by the reading of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero...This is the end to which I have proposed to direct, God willing, and guide the rest of my life’.³⁰¹ Similarly, in a letter to Sturm, he stated that ‘With the favour of Christ I have resolved to build the tabernacle of my life and studies on the reading of Scriptures and have in mind to join Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes and Cicero’.³⁰² In a letter he wrote to Cecil in 1553 in which he tried to summarise his future intentions on his return from Germany, he made it clear that his priority was to ‘keep company with the Bible, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes and Tully’ and

²⁹⁷ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.42-43. Ascham letter to Grindal (L) G:vol.1, 30/H:32, 1545.

²⁹⁸ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.43.

²⁹⁹ Ascham letter to Leicester (E) G:vol.2, 59, 1564.

³⁰⁰ Ascham letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 191/H:172, 1555, p.445.

³⁰¹ (L) G:vol.1, 20, p.45/V&H:6, 1543/4.

³⁰² (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.183/V&H:39, 1550.

envisaged that through doing so he would ‘show others the way of both truth in doctrine and true dealing of living’.³⁰³

Ascham also viewed his classical training as an important tool in the study of the theological texts of the Fathers and Scripture. His conviction that there was no substitute for going back to the original Greek in Scriptural matters was unshakeable. Latin could, as far as he was concerned, be a useful medium, but he was fully aware of the potential for corruption if it were not based on the original Greek. He commented in a letter to Lee of 1541/2 concerning his Oecumenius translations that, although there was ample store of patristic writing in Greek, ‘they [the Fathers] do not speak to us in safe and good Latin...’.³⁰⁴ To be ‘safe and good’, knowledge of the original was necessary. Accuracy was also vital. This again entailed a full understanding of language which only a proper training in ancient tongues could offer. An article by Greene on Ascham centres on precisely this quality of precision which he argues was the unifying thread that ran through Ascham’s works.³⁰⁵ The literature, as much as the languages, of the ancient Greeks and Romans was also, in Ascham’s view, entirely compatible with the Word of God. In his personal copy of the Greek New Testament he had added in his own handwriting details about classical authors. Under the very heading of *Novi Testamenti Omnia* on the front cover there appeared two references to Xenophon, firstly to the fact he reminds men to honour the gods, and secondly to his ability to ‘testify, no less than the Christian’, how to live a devout life.³⁰⁶ Within the Gospel of John, Acts and Revelations respectively, he referenced Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus*, Herodotus, Menander and Euripides as though to highlight their relevance and congruence with the Word of God.

The momentum for a union between classical learning and religious purpose was not coming solely from Ascham and his contemporaries. It was echoed at the very top of government: the Royal Injunctions of Cromwell issued in 1535 to the University were clear that provisions for an increased emphasis on classical learning went hand in hand with a greater focus on the

³⁰³ (E) G:vol.1, 145, 1553, p.350.

³⁰⁴ (L) H:10, 1541/2.

³⁰⁵ T.M. Greene ‘Roger Ascham: The Perfect End of Shooting’ *E.L.H.*, 36, 4 (1969) pp.609-625. He suggests that this predisposition for precision was reflected in his references to archery (eg ‘hitting the mark’) which should be understood metaphorically.

³⁰⁶ Ascham’s annotations on Greek New Testament held at Hatfield House (7522). The first reference is written in Greek: *Xenophon apomnēmoneuōn....timan theous*; the second is in Latin: *et postea probat Xenophon non minus Christiani..... adiuvere homines non otiosos ... sed diligentes et laboribus deditos...*

reading of Scripture.³⁰⁷ A requirement that all colleges provide at their own expense daily public lectures in Latin and Greek was framed within a desire to ‘promote piety and extirpate heresy and superstition’.³⁰⁸ From that point on, any efforts to forge a bond between classical texts and the theological programme promulgated by Henry and his successors could not also help but have a distinctly religio-political overlay.

Ascham was fully alive to such developments - they coincided fully with his outlook - and he tried to capitalise on them. During the years 1545-6 following an Act of Parliament which gave the King the power to dissolve any college or chantry at either University St John’s College was facing possible dissolution.³⁰⁹ Ascham argued against this, but he did so in a way that forcefully highlighted the political and religious value to the State of the classics studied at the University. In one of his letters to Cranmer, he very carefully and deliberately presented classical literature as usefully ancillary to Scripture: ‘Others for the daily reading of God’s word unite the propositions of Augustine principally and their knowledge of languages... We summon Plato and Aristotle to perfect this training...’.³¹⁰ He also initiated correspondence with a number of powerful figures, each time making a real point of promoting classical learning. In his letter to Anne Parr (Katherine Parr’s sister), for example, he enclosed a copy of Cicero’s *De Officiis*, stating ‘You do wisely to study it: a speech proper, a propriety more unique cannot anywhere be discovered...the genuine example of honour is expressed in his books to the imitation of which anyone who has given himself cannot be far distant from the finest habit surely of civil life’.³¹¹ Through such correspondence Ascham was not simply validating the government’s merger of classical study and religion, but engaging in an act of self-fashioning, presenting himself as a key player in the nation’s religious welfare.³¹²

One possible interpretation of Ascham’s work, the *Toxophilus*, was that it was an attempt by Ascham to unify the interests of classical scholarship and State religion in a single drive for

³⁰⁷ Leedham-Green, *Concise History*, pp.36-37; Leader, *History Cambridge*, pp.332-3.

³⁰⁸ Leader, *History Cambridge*, pp.332ff. Subsequent official edicts, such as a code of 1545, placed even greater emphasis on the original texts of Plato and Aristotle in parallel with Scripture. One of Ascham’s books held at Hatfield House was the works of Aristotle in 2 vols: *Opera...Omnia* (Basel, 1531), with archive numbers 7927 and 7928.

³⁰⁹ Leader, *History Cambridge*, pp.343-4.

³¹⁰ (L) G:vol.1, 27, p.68/H: 30, 1545.

³¹¹ (L) G:vol.1, 42/V&H:14, 1545.

³¹² See Greenblatt for a discussion of the enormous opportunities for self-fashioning that the Reformation opened up in *Renaissance Self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London, 1980).

reform. The treatise was organised around a Platonic dialogue between Toxophilus and Philologus, two names formed from ancient Greek terms meaning ‘Lover of the bow’ and ‘Lover of words’. Detail in the text points to the fact that the character Toxophilus was meant to represent King and State: indeed Henry at that time was fighting off the French, in part with the help of English bowmen.³¹³ Philologus, the academic, could quite easily be understood as the personification of *studia humanitatis*; classical references to ancient history and classical literature suffused the work. Both characters were presented as being mutually beneficial and compatible: as Ascham stressed, the book and the bow go together, ‘by which two thynges, the whole commonwealth both in peace and war is chiefly ruled and defended withal’.³¹⁴ Ascham seemed here to be doing nothing short of impressing upon Henry the essential service humanities and classics could offer in the negotiation of his rule as supreme head of the Church and extirpator of error. His direct reference to Cheke, the Regius Professor of Greek, further underscored this. Ascham made it clear that ‘the commodity and health of the whole realm’ was at stake in Cheke’s tutoring of Edward VI whom Ascham hoped would ‘[sur]pass his tutor in learning and knowledge, follow his father in wisdom, and...set out and maintain God’s Word to the abolishment of all papistry [and]..the confusion of all heresy...to this realm’.³¹⁵ The entire work was, in essence, a manifesto for the union of the new Supreme Head of a reformed Church and scholars of classical learning.

Classical references were fully integrated into his theological work, the *Themata Theologica*. They helped to clarify and illuminate his theological argumentation. For example, when Ascham argued, pursuant to the fourth *thema*, that deeds could only be judged good inasmuch as they accorded with God’s command, he twice quoted Xenophon followed by Cicero.³¹⁶ He later used the example of Socrates to elucidate the New Testament saying ‘If any man thinketh he know anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know’ regarding the infinite nature of God.³¹⁷ He used a hemistich from Ovid to convey the importance of enduring persecution in the Christian imagination and support his argument that the righteous are weighed down more than the bad.³¹⁸ He even used classical authors to assist in the interpretation of doctrine. He adduced qualities set out in Cicero’s *De Inventione* in order to define the *iustus* (‘righteous/justified’) man and elsewhere in the tract made a point of

³¹³ See also Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.54-55.

³¹⁴ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, p.135.

³¹⁵ *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2, p.68.

³¹⁶ *Themata*, pp.183-5.

³¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 8:2. *Themata*, pp.202-4.

³¹⁸ *Themata*, p.233.

claiming how much Cicero could teach Christian men about the grace of God.³¹⁹ At one point, he explained the value the ancients could bring to theological discussions of this sort:

These examples have been taken by me from the schools of the pagans not so that I may prove my cause but so that it shames us of our (way) if those blind men who (as Cicero very elegantly says) had no solid and manifest image of the true law and of genuine justice but were using the shade and images approached more closely the consideration of truth than us who do not follow a fictitious image but the clearest model of God the Father, not a shadow, but the light who is Jesus Christ, the true light and our most genuine justification.³²⁰

Taking this further, there was a section in Ascham's last work, the *Scholemaster*, in which he seemed to suggest that classical literature could provide an actual template for comprehending Christianity in a confessional way. The narrative of the Odyssey in which the hero navigated his way with judgement and sound reasoning through various obstacles and hazards could be applied to the practice of 'Christ's true religion' and the need, for instance, to avoid 'papisty or worse'.³²¹ Guiding forces that were available to Odysseus, such as Pallas Athene, the counsel of Tiresias and the herb moly, were, according to Ascham, meant by Homer to represent '...that love of honesty and hatred of ill which David more plainly calls the fear of God, the only remedy against all enchantments of sin'.³²² Indeed, Ascham developed the symbolic attributes of moly at even greater length, commenting on how the 'black root and white flower, sour at the first, but sweet in the end, which Hesiodus termeth "the study of virtue"...and that which is to be most marvelled at, the divine poet Homer saith plainly that this medicine...is not found out by man, but given and taught by God'.³²³ Ancient narratives were providing ways to comprehend the mysteries of Christianity and the dangers posed by error. And, as far as Ascham was concerned, failure to attend to these authors could result in heterodoxy; he would at one point correlate disrespect for classics (such as Cicero and Aristotle) with the heresy of Arianism.³²⁴

It was within the context of his formative trip to Germany that we are perhaps best able to appreciate the extent to which Ascham's classical learning was totally bound up with his view of religious orthodoxy. Immediately prior to the trip Cheke evidently gave Ascham some kind of 'pep talk': Ascham recalled how 'on the day before the Lord Ambassador made

³¹⁹ *Themata*, pp.161 and 198.

³²⁰ *Themata*, p.184.

³²¹ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.149-158.

³²² As Giles notes, Ascham was referring to Psalm 33 here (G:vol.3, p.152).

³²³ *The Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.151-157.

³²⁴ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.176-177.

his departure from London, you [Cheke] planted in me, by that talk in your study, the seed of true religion and the correct method of study which can never escape me. I was very glad that Demosthenes and you were close friends'.³²⁵ Cheke's exhortation which explicitly blended classics and correct religion served as a highly apposite prelude to his three year excursion. Vos and Hatch comment that 'We read more about the ambassador's classical studies in Ascham's letters than we do about his diplomatic activities at the Imperial Court'.³²⁶ This however misses the point that for Ascham his classical activities in Germany were totally part of the religious experience. Accordingly, the classical texts that Ascham reported on in his encounters with Protestant reformers, for example, his request of an Aeschines commentary from the Fuggers' librarian, Hieronymus Wolf, his discovery of a commentary on Aristotle by Simon Grynaeus, and the onward transmission of a Cicero commentary by Michael Toxites, were for him akin to an augmentation of his own religious enhancement and served to demarcate the existence of a Protestant textual community in which learned men were galvanised through common intellectual and religious exchanges and shared modes of inquiry.³²⁷

Ascham's life was one in which humanist training and classical learning did not exist apart from religion and theology. His formative years and much of his adult life were spent in settings where classics and religion, humanist skills and theological reform were connected, complementary and concordant. Ascham himself believed in this harmony, promoted it and lived by it.

³²⁵ (L) G:vol.1, 108, p.220/V&H:34, 1550.

³²⁶ V&H: p.126: up to five days in a week were spent reading Greek.

³²⁷ Ascham's letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.1, 128, 1551; Ryan, *Ascham*, p.143.

Chapter 2: Contextualizing Ascham's *Apologia*

Having gained a more rounded impression of Ascham and his life, it is now necessary to contextualize the precise circumstances in which he wrote his *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*. The work had its genesis in Cambridge 1547-8 at the very start of Edward's reign. It came into being against a backdrop of religious disturbances in the University and was born directly out of a series of highly controversial theological disputations which were eventually curtailed by the authorities. The tract's polemical message about the wrongful usurpation of the Lord's Supper by the Mass was noticeably outspoken and far-reaching at a time of marked governmental caution regarding reform of the Eucharist. Ascham's *Apologia* helps to put a spot-light on this first year of Edward's reign and to illuminate how a group of University men, rather than the King's newly formed government, seemed to be the ones pushing the theological boundaries. As regards the first year or so of this fascinating but short-lived reign, Ascham's work raises some interesting questions about the origins and ownership of Edwardine Protestantism and the debate that has grown up around it. It also prompts a review of the lines along which the relationship between University and government are usually assessed.

Edward VI's reign has received relatively little historiographical attention compared to the other Tudor monarchs, and some prevailing assumptions deserve to be challenged. One tendency is to view Edward's reign as a uniformly Protestant era, a single block of six years which has been rather simplistically classified as 'the most advanced Protestant period in English Tudor history'.¹ The early caution of the Protestant regime is often too easily dismissed, for example, with comments like 'they [ie. the Protestant leadership under Edward] moved with a caution which at times can seem like uncertainty, but from the outset their intention was to destroy one church and build another'.² Furthermore, aside from the more obvious distinctions made between Somerset's incumbency and that of Northumberland, this model has left little scope for dividing the reign up and nuancing, in particular, its early stages, drawing attention to the initial caution and the fits and starts of

¹ A recent example is Davies, *Religion of the Word*: the approach of her review of the printed works of the period is thematic rather than chronological, her central purpose being to 'identify an ideological outlook and vocabulary of Protestantism' (p.xv).

² E. Ives, *The Reformation Experience, Living through the Turbulent Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, Chicago and Michigan, 2012), p.181.

reform.³ As a consequence, we are less sensitive to the strikingly progressive nature and bold approach of some of the tracts emerging in the first year or so such as Ascham's *Apologia*. We also risk losing a sense of how the message of the *Apologia* compares to others belonging to the same time frame.

Another entrenched historiographical approach is to attribute exclusive responsibility for the reforming impetus to the new regime as though it was they who led the way at every step. The most influential study in this regard has been MacCulloch's work on Cranmer. MacCulloch depicts the Archbishop of Canterbury and a small group of politicians as the chief architects of a Reformed Edwardine programme who 'knew from the start in 1547 exactly what Reformation they wanted' and for whom 'there was an essential continuity of purpose in a graduated series of religious changes...'.⁴ The approach has become all the more embedded when taken together with Hoak's book on the Edwardine Council and Davies's study of the Edwardine period, both of which credit without question the 'King's Council' or 'the establishment' with the move towards a more Protestant settlement.⁵ The narrative leaves little room for mounting an argument about competing claims to religious authority. Yet, when we set the Cambridge discussions about the Eucharist and Ascham's unequivocal attack on the Mass against the action being taken by the government and Cranmer at the same time, it becomes quickly clear how much further advanced those in Cambridge were. The various religious disturbances that arose there during 1547, culminating, in part, in Ascham's *Apologia*, undoubtedly represented a clamour for Eucharistic reform that originated from outside the government. Noises about theological reform from Cambridge may have constituted a distraction; they may also have applied considerable pressure. The fact that this campaign for change came from a centre as theologically and intellectually prestigious as Cambridge gave it considerable clout.

In addition, single attributions of agency also militate against a more thorough examination of divisions, or at least differences within in the ruling party. There are aspects of Ascham's

³ Historical works often divide the reign up in this way, for example, Jordan's two volume work - *Edward VI: the Young King. The Protectorship of the Duke of Somerset* (London, 1968) and *Edward VI: the Threshold of Power. The Dominance of the Duke of Northumberland* (London, 1970); and P. Williams, *The Later Tudors: England 1547-1603* (Oxford, 1995). An obvious antidote has been MacCulloch's work - his *Tudor Church Militant* is considerably more attentive to the individual years of the reign.

⁴ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.365-6. See also his references to the small and close-knit evangelical establishment which remained exclusive and committed to its agenda for religious reform and for the entire reign (*Tudor Church Militant*, p.8).

⁵ D.E. Hoak, *King's Council in the reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge, 1976); Davies, *Religion of the Word*.

Apologia, such as his intention to forward it to Somerset rather than to Cranmer, which perhaps suggest that this government in its infancy was not quite as cohesive as we have often assumed. Without wanting to return to the older historiographical model of Edward's reign as a factional battleground, an acknowledgement of the tensions within the ruling party would at least redress the balance.⁶ Cranmer's apparent disapproval of certain bold Protestant stances being taken in Cambridge in contrast with the more sympathetic disposition of Somerset suggests a rather more fragmented ruling elite whose members might be played off one against the other.

There is a final aspect of the historical debate that Ascham's *Apologia* can help supplement, namely the nature of the relationship between government and Cambridge University within the context of the religious Reformation. An older historiographical tendency to locate the seeds of the evangelical Reformation in the White Horse Inn has sensibly been superseded by a more balanced approach which acknowledges the importance of academic scholarship to respective regimes.⁷ Several more recent studies helpfully discuss the close ties between Cambridge University and different Tudor governments, particularly those of Henry and Elizabeth.⁸ The result is that there now exists a considerably greater range of views about the level of influence which the University had on the shape of religious settlements. However, with increasing weight being placed on the patronage of University men by government and on the assimilation of Universities and their members to a government agenda, the sway those in the University exercised in reality is tending to be diminished. Ascham's theological intervention at a critical time is a welcome reminder of the active rather than passive role those within the University could play in the advancement of religious reform. And this was a role that was not necessarily confined to the ivory towers of the scholarly elite, but could entail a more public dissemination of ideas. This depiction of the *Apologia* chimes especially well with recent studies on the Protestant Reformation which have presented the Universities as flagships of the Edwardine Reformation and helpfully highlighted the extreme blurring of

⁶ The theme of factionalism is a feature of Jordan's volumes on Edward VI and taken up by C. Skidmore, *Edward VI: The Lost King of England* (London, 2007).

⁷ Mainly responsible for the older tradition was Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, the narrative of which Rupp closely cleaved to in G. Rupp, *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge, 1947), chapter 2.

⁸ More recent studies include: general histories of the University such as Mullinger, *History University of Cambridge*; Morgan, *History of the University*; and Leedham-Green, *Concise History*. See also A. Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: evangelicals in the early English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003); W.S. Hudson, *Cambridge Connection and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559* (Durham N.C., 1980); McConica, *Humanists and Rex*, 'The Role of English Humanists', pp. 19-40.

boundaries between learning, kingly authority and godly Reformation that took place during this short but important reign.⁹

2.1 The Religious Challenges of Edward VI's First Year

Ascham's *Apologia* was a product of the first year of Edward VI's reign. It was a year of immense consequence. Henry's death at the end of January 1547 had marked a huge release for those who sought more far-reaching change and, around a new monarch sympathetic to further reform, a government with distinctly Protestant ambitions gathered. However, despite all the promise and excitement, what in fact seemed to characterise this first year of 1547 was not so much a proliferation of progressive theological reform but the Henrician legacy that endured in the new reign. Whatever the private hopes and intentions of the newly installed government, certainly when it came to the Eucharist, the religious landscape remained a distinctly cautious one.

For most of Edward's first year, the Mass remained in place. At one of the initial events most likely to be scrutinized for symbolic gestures, the funeral of Henry, masses were offered for his soul.¹⁰ And at his coronation, Edward attended the high Mass.¹¹ Over any kind of discussion about the Mass, Henry's shadow still loomed large in the form of the (highly conservative) Six Articles which had reaffirmed a traditional interpretation of the Mass, communion of one kind for the laity, clerical celibacy, and validity of private masses. Failure to adhere to such doctrine brought with it heavy penalties. Indeed, there had been a series of executions of men and women on charges of sacramentarianism in 1546 pursuant to the Act.¹² Heresy laws dating to 1538, which forbade discussion of the Eucharist on pain of death, also survived. Nor was such legislation merely something that hung in the air; Injunctions published in the summer of 1547 gave it official bite, requiring that all existing religious legislation was to be obeyed.¹³ The Six Articles and Heresy Laws would only be repealed ten months into the reign in Edward's first parliament in November-December 1547.¹⁴ Any religious policy that was passed and publicised earlier that year by the new regime – the 1547 Injunctions and Homilies, for example – did not broach at all the matter of Eucharistic reform and indeed the former left completely intact the terminology and service

⁹ A. Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, pp.261, 471 and 474; Alford, *Kingship Edward VI*, p.125.

¹⁰ J. Loach, 'The function of ceremonial in the reign of Henry VIII', *Past and Present* 142 (1994), pp.43-68.

¹¹ C.W. Dugmore, *The Mass and the English Reformers* (London, 1958), p.115.

¹² MacCulloch in *Cranmer*, p.358.

¹³ Issued 31 July 1547 and based on Henrician Injunctions.

¹⁴ 1 Edward VI c.12.

of the high Mass.¹⁵ There was also no public pronouncement on the Eucharist in the Parliamentary sitting.

It was only at the very end of Edward's first year that any steps at all to reform the Mass were taken. Even then, any changes made were conspicuously counter-balanced with provisions that ensured the maintenance of public order and elimination of radicalism. For example, an Act which required the sacrament be ministered to the people under both kinds, namely both the bread and the wine rather than the bread alone as before, at the same time made it an imprisonable offence to abuse the sacrament of the altar, be it through disputing, speculation or insult.¹⁶ Concern about religious control was, it seemed, as important to the government as the amendment of doctrine. As potent a concern was the fear of radicalism, especially Anabaptism, a movement that terrified rulers across Europe.¹⁷ Anxiety rather than confidence seemed to underlie a further policy statement issued during the same Parliamentary session, namely *A Proclamation against the vnreuer[n]t disputers and talkers of the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ*.¹⁸ Although this document made some concessions to Protestantism in its lexicon, referring to 'communion' and avoiding the name of the 'Mass', its clear and overriding purpose was very definitely to put a stop to 'contentious and open' speculation and discussion (including preaching and disputation) about the Eucharist. The message of the Proclamation was plain – the government were, for now, closing down, rather than opening up, discussion of this doctrinal issue. The pace of reform in the early stages of this new reign was not what one could call rapid, nor was there established anything that resembled 'full-blown Protestantism'. On the contrary, Eucharistic reform was tentative and piecemeal.

When set against the official caution and anxieties about any discussion of the Mass, one is immediately struck by the controversial nature, timing and public profile of the episodes that took place in Cambridge during this first year of Edward's reign, events in which Ascham

¹⁵ *Iniunccions geue[n] by the moste excellent prince, Edward the sixte by the grace of God, kyng of England, Frau[n]ce, and Irelande: defendor of the faythe, and in earthe vnder Christ, of the churche of Englande and of Ireland the supreme hedde: to all and singuler his louyng subiectes, aswell of the clergie, as of the laietie* (referred to in this thesis as 'Injunctions') (London, 1547) (STC 10089); *Certayne sermons, or homilies, appoynted by the Kynges Maiestie* (London, 1547) (STC 13639.5).

¹⁶ 1 Edward VI c.1: Act Against the Reuilers of the Sacrament and for the Communion of both kinds. It was passed on 2 December and received Royal Assent on 27 December 1547. It is printed in H. Gee and W.J. Hardy (eds.), *Documents illustrative of the history of the English Church* (London, 1896), pp.322- 328.

¹⁷ G.H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirkville, 1992); Davies, *Religion of the Word*, chapter 2.

¹⁸ Issued by Edward on 27 December 1547 and published in London (STC 7812).

himself took a central role and would culminate in the composition of his *Apologia*. These events, although condoned and to some extent encouraged by government to begin with, as they went on, were increasingly met with official disapproval.¹⁹

The first of these episodes took place at King's College. Evidence is scant, but it appears that fellows there had started to openly debate about religion and were refusing to offer private masses for their deceased benefactors.²⁰ It was an inflammatory issue and resulted in a public reprimand from the religiously conservative provost of King's, the Bishop of Chichester, George Day.²¹ The reprimand was met with open defiance; in response Walter Haddon, Latin expert and Protestant activist, sent a letter back on behalf of the senior members of college defending the right of disputation and the stance taken on the private masses. He described the debates that had been held as a *salutaris causa* ('a useful/advantageous cause', *salutaris* also having connections with the idea of 'salvation') and interestingly connected them with the 'royal will', Haddon using the Latin adjective *regius* ('royal') throughout.²² The letter further suggested that misleading and deliberately damning reports about the debates had been relayed to Day. The dispute quickly became serious and, within a short space of time, Day had resigned his post to be replaced by Cheke the following April.²³ It is likely that the King's debates were the direct catalyst for the publication in 1548 of a treatise devoted to a public demolition of the private mass by Edmund Guest, fellow and vice-provost of that college. In it, he excoriated 'the unsufferable abomination of the popyshe private pryvye masse...'.²⁴ He claimed that private masses constituted image worship and idolatry and had 'usurped...evangelicall truthe'.²⁵ There has been very little comment in secondary

¹⁹ As Morgan puts it, the history of the relationship between the State and the Universities has always involved a paradox of ambivalence, *History University Cambridge*, p.147.

²⁰ Strype, *Cranmer*, vol.1, pp.333-4. G. Haddon, *Epistles* (London, 1567), pp.169-175. Preliminary searches in the King's College archives, including the Mundum and Commons books (both in Latin), for records of these disputations have not produced further evidence.

²¹ ODNB for Day.

²² Haddon's letter (*Epistles*, pp.169-175), dated May 1547 and written in Latin, is also included as an appendix in Strype's *Cranmer*, but only in the Ecclesiastical History Society version (Oxford, 1848), as appendix 48, vol.2, p.631. There exists no English translation, but Strype summarises some of it in *Cranmer*, pp.331-2 (in vol.1 of that version). Haddon is described as 'one of the great and eminent lights of the Reformation in Cambridge under King Edward' (ODNB).

²³ ODNB for Day.

²⁴ *A treatise against the preuee masse in the behalfe and furtheraunce of the mooste hylle comunyon made by Edmund Gest* (London, 1548) (STC 11802), sig.A1^r. The work makes no direct reference to the debates held at King's, but he was explicit in the dedication about the fact that its publication meant that 'accordingly he is disliked rather than liked by many'. The dedication was also evidence for the overwhelming sense of religious duty he felt in composing this piece against the private masses, despite, as he claims, being ill-qualified for such a task. He would also take a major role in the Cambridge disputations on the Eucharist in 1549.

²⁵ Guest, *A treatise against the preuee masse*, sigs.A1^r-A2^r.

works about the King's College disputations, Haddon's stance or Guest's tract. However, their importance in both practical and symbolic terms should not be underestimated.²⁶ Here, immediately upon the accession of a new monarch and at a time when the Henrician Six Articles which upheld private masses was still in force, University academics were openly debating and challenging their legitimacy. On this occasion the regime would fully acquiesce in these protests: Guest's tract was published *cum privilegio* and it is quite possible that some external official pressure was applied which finally compelled Day to resign in what should otherwise have been a routine academic spat.²⁷ The fact is though that the impulse for reform was coming from the University. It was University members who were most keen to ensure that Day was a casualty, thereby raising the profile of action taken against private masses. Guest's treatise was conspicuously dedicated to Cheke, perhaps as a means to highlight some sort of allegiance or solidarity. Ascham too got involved, referring to the resignation of Day in a letter to Cecil, and making it quite clear which side he supported: he stressed his hope that Cheke would soon be provost of King's inasmuch as 'that bishop (viz. Day) does not further learning'.²⁸

At St John's, Ascham's own college, there were also various protests against the Mass during the year of 1547 which, this time, triggered rather less friendly governmental intervention. In the spring of 1547 a young fellow of the college, Thomas Dobbe, was expelled for openly challenging the rule of clerical celibacy and wanting to marry.²⁹ After he had been, according to Foxe, hounded out of college by some of its senior members, he went to London where, when at Mass ceremony in St Paul's church one day, he disrupted the moment of elevation, exhorting the congregation not to honour the visible bread as God. He was promptly arrested. News of his actions reached Cranmer who authorised his imprisonment and thereupon Dobbe quickly became sick and died. The affair almost certainly occasioned the resignation of the master of the college, John Taylor, shortly afterwards, and there is therefore reason to believe that young Dobbe was not a one-off maverick but part of a

²⁶ Alford comments that King's College was at the centre of Reformation, but does not elaborate further: *Kingship Edward VI* (p.129).

²⁷ Day would eventually be imprisoned by the regime in 1550.

²⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. Ascham was also a good friend of Haddon, referring to the latter in a number of his letters (for example, in his letter to the fellows of John's (E) G:vol.1, 133, 1551, p.315). Ascham also drew up the petition for Haddon's appointment to Regius Professor of Civil Law (ODNB for Haddon) and Ascham mentions him regularly in correspondence and in his *Scholemaster*.

²⁹ J. Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1563 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> (and last Accessed February 2014), book 4, p.741. MacCulloch recounts the episode and comments on its curious quality (*Cranmer*, p.371). For the expulsion of Dobbe, see Linehan, *St John's*, p.45.

broader movement within the college.³⁰ Certainly, Dobbe's overt stands against clerical marriage and Mass had all the trappings of an orchestrated display and may, like the Lennox case which MacCulloch also documents, have constituted a way for those of a more extreme theological disposition to test official reaction.³¹ In this case, however, the waters were being tested in a worryingly public way.

A yet more provocative stance against the Mass took place in the Autumn.³² A Frenchman by the name of Joseph, a scholar of John's who was in the service of Lord Robert Stafford, secretly cut the rope which supported the pyx from the college altar.³³ Such a gesture represented a direct and hostile assault on the adoration of the Mass or, as Strype put it, an unequivocal 'affront to popish service' which generated a 'great noise in college'.³⁴ Moreover, as in the Dobbe affair, the matter was also carried beyond the college walls; Joseph's example was mimicked in London with crucifixes and images being pulled down in various churches.³⁵ The episode was immediately referred to Cranmer, this time, by the new master of the college, William Bill, another indication perhaps that the college was increasingly becoming accountable for a radical element within it. Although we do not know whether Ascham was involved in the Dobbe affair, he was in this matter of Joseph. Ascham penned the letter in the name of the college to the Archbishop alerting him to the episode.³⁶ It is unlikely that Ascham wrote this letter in his capacity as Public Orator for the University; this was a college affair. Almost certainly he took responsibility for writing it because of a vested interest. In the letter, Ascham was careful to diffuse the situation, dismissing the 'improper daring' of the young scholar as a 'prank' and reassuring Cranmer that 'we have dealt with the affair with the least disturbance'. The fact that he made it clear that the bearer of the letter, Lever, who was, of course, Protestant in his sympathies would 'explain the whole affair in more detail' suggests that Ascham was keen to explain to Cranmer in rather

³⁰ ODNB for Taylor.

³¹ In the Lennox case, Cranmer was required to take a decision regarding the denial of the real flesh and blood of Christ in the sacrament, though this time engineered by religious conservatives (*Cranmer*, p.371).

³² Also recounted by Baker in his *History of the College of St John the Evangelist Cambridge* ed. by J.E.B. Mayor (Cambridge, 1869), p.125 who confirms that the main sources for this episode are Ascham's letters and Strype.

³³ Stafford was a courtier who happened to be in residence in the college but was not taking a degree. The evidence for this is in Ascham's letter to Cranmer (L) G:vol.1, 63, September 1547/H:65, October 1547 and Strype's *Cranmer*, pp.232-23. The Corpus Christi Day procession, when the host was carried around in the pyx, had been abandoned as early as 1535: Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p.69.

³⁴ Strype, *Cranmer*, p.233.

³⁵ Strype, *Cranmer*, p.233.

³⁶ (L) G:vol.1, 63/H:65, 1547.

more careful terms the religious developments then taking place at St John's.³⁷ Ascham's closing comment in the letter was 'we are afraid that some men who are angry at the downfall and ruin of scrupulous observance and attempt to cover in darkness the light of the Gospel wish to use this act to prove the honour of the college is violated'; despite the furore, Ascham's first concern was still that of furthering evangelical reform.³⁸

2.2 Theological Disputations

It was at the end of 1547 in the immediate aftermath of these religious upheavals that Ascham and others held extended discussions about the Mass. The discussions took the form of disputations and were held first within St John's College and then at the University schools. Ascham played a pivotal role. He was responsible for their coordination and continuation, even in the face of official opposition. As Haddon had done with the King's debates on private masses, Ascham became a chief spokesperson. Although Strype also makes reference to the 1547 theological disputations, by far the best source for details of their timing and general parameters is Ascham's correspondence.³⁹ In contrast to the ODNB depiction of Ascham's role in the disputations which casts him very much as a conciliator and 'dismayed by the whole affair', his letters indicate a real sense of mission and ownership of the debates. The disputations were not an innocuous academic affair, but intended as a means to accelerate theological reform.

At some point in November, two members and senior fellows of the college, Roger Hutchinson and Thomas Lever, disputed within St John's the question of 'whether the Mass was the Lord's Supper or not'.⁴⁰ Ascham wrote: 'Our intent was to find out... what could be drawn from the founts of sacred Scripture in defence of the Mass... We brought to the topic the ancient canons of the early Church, the councils of the Fathers, the decrees of Popes, the judgements of the Doctors, with a multitude of questionists and all the modernists we could

³⁷ Strype suggests that Lever made a successful defence and avoided the need for any expulsions (*Cranmer*, p.233).

³⁸ Linehan suggests that college records of payments made for trips to London at this time point to the fact other interest groups from the college were also seeking to have their say at court: *St John's*, p.45.

³⁹ Strype, *Cranmer*, pp. 233-5. Of particular relevance are Ascham's letters to: the master of St John's, William Bill, (L) G:vol.1, 82, January 1548/H:81, December 1547; and to Cecil (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 5 January 1548. Searches undertaken of St John's College Archives have yielded no further information over and above Ascham's letters, some of the originals of which are contained in the Thick Black Book, a register of letters etc.

⁴⁰ As per the wording of Ascham's letter (L) G:vol.1,83/H:82, 1548. Ryan infers from one of these letters that discussions about the Mass had 'been ongoing throughout the autumn' (*Ascham*, p.92). Both Hutchinson and Lever had been appointed fellows of St John's in 1543 and senior fellows in March and July 1547 respectively. For further information on Lever, see chapter 1. Hutchinson was a noted Protestant theologian and particularly dedicated to the Cranmerian programme for reform (ODNB).

find, both German and Roman'.⁴¹ These college disputations took place very much on Ascham's watch. In November of 1547 Ascham was not only acting temporarily as master of the college in William Bill's absence, but also served as president of the disputations.⁴² However, it soon became clear that the disputations had met with disapproval and there was a 'common demand' in the college, encapsulated in a letter of reprimand by Bill (*in absentia*), that these disputations be stopped.⁴³ One reason for this may have been because the content of the disputations began to be noted in public sermons.⁴⁴ Another may be because the disputations were perceived to contravene the government Proclamation against irreverence against the sacrament.⁴⁵ Ascham took personal responsibility for composing a response which claimed that Bill's letter had 'thrown us into disorders', but made it clear that he rejected the grounds of the reprimand, writing 'we shall willingly declare how much you [Bill] differ from us'.⁴⁶ Ascham also seemed to be at the centre of the decision, in the face of this mounting pressure, to transfer the disputations from college to the public schools of the University.⁴⁷

More striking still was the extent to which Ascham's stewardship bore all the hallmarks of not just a religious reformer, but a subversive one. As regards the disputations, he was clearly partisan and fully cognizant of their divisive nature, referring in his letter to Bill to 'sides', 'the fury of the papists', and expressing the fear that 'your [viz. Bill's] letter will be

⁴¹ Ascham letter to Cecil (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. The reference to 'German' almost certainly denotes 'Lutheran'.

⁴² That he was acting-master has been inferred by both Hatch (footnote to letter H:82) and Ryan (*Ascham*, p.92) from the wording of Ascham's letter to Cecil. But we can also bear in mind that, in addition to being appointed master of John's in 1547, Bill had also been appointed JP for Cambridgeshire and admitted to the rectory of Sutton, Bedfordshire, either of which may explain his absence (see ODNB for William Bill). It may even be that he was prone to bouts of illness - there is a letter (undated, but probably c.1545) held in St John's College Archives (MS D105/321) from William Bill's brother to the previous master of the college, John Taylor, concerning William's absence from college due to ill health.

⁴³ Quoting Ascham's letter to Cecil ((L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548). The letter from Bill of 24 November has not survived.

⁴⁴ Ascham's letter to Cecil, (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548; Strype, *Cranmer*, p.234. Ascham's letter to Bill, (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8, also stated that 'some in the town...talked about it'.

⁴⁵ It is interesting to note Ascham's emphasis on how 'tranquil' their conduct was in his letter to Bill: (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8. The fact that in January 1548 the Government felt the need to confirm that this Proclamation did not apply to the University (see below) highlights the fact that there was evidently some lack of clarity about this.

⁴⁶ Letter to Bill (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8. Ascham's letter alludes to some young man named Fawden in connection to the disruptions who may have been too publicly espousing theological views pursuant to the disputations (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.92), but there exists no further information about this man other than that he was the bearer of a letter from Ascham to Cheke dated December 1547, (L) G:vol.1, 78/H:80, a letter which seemed to request Cheke's assistance in smoothing things over in the aftermath of the Eucharistic disputations (as discussed below).

⁴⁷ Letters (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8 and (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. Strype, *The Life of Cheke*, p.11.

read often by those not friendly to us'.⁴⁸ Far from viewing these disputations as a private affair, he was open in his hopes for greater publicity: in the same letter he suggested that a key aim was to 'bring them into the light and sight of men' and to 'learn what can be said on the question of the Mass which has so strong a hold on men's consciences'.⁴⁹ Most noteworthy of all was his tone of defiance and complete acknowledgement that they may have been contravening official policy: he admitted that 'There are some who reproach us about obedience to magistrates and some who have said "thou art not Caesar's friend". We wish that our hearts and theirs – we write these words reluctantly – had been so opened that how we both feel towards our Prince and his laws might be openly disclosed'.⁵⁰ He further suggested that their mission was to 'plough and prepare the consciences of men so that they [the magistrates] may later sow the seeds of the best laws more seasonably'.⁵¹ This was a dauntless stance to take, especially since the next round of disputations in the public schools prompted an intervention from not only the Vice-Chancellor of the University but also the Archbishop, Cranmer himself. The disputations were prohibited outright.⁵² Ascham wrote tellingly that they were 'angry' and that 'he [Cranmer] was unfavourable to us'.⁵³

Such high level intervention was significant. Historically, interference into University disputations was rare. Theological disputations were a long-standing staple of college and University life.⁵⁴ Progression at every level of a student's study was dependent on the requirement to dispute and they were used in all academic disciplines.⁵⁵ Disputations were the primary way of ensuring that the foundations of knowledge were well-laid and it was common to maintain all sides for argument's sake, including unacceptable opinions and heresies.⁵⁶ That disputations were normally conducted in an atmosphere of freedom may be inferred from Ascham's adamant claim in response to the ban: 'Our intent was to find out

⁴⁸ (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8.

⁴⁹ Ascham seems almost to have contradicted himself here following his insistence that the disputations were conducted privately.

⁵⁰ Letter (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8. The quote contains the words that were spoken to Pilate when he wanted to liberate Christ and comes from John 19:12.

⁵¹ (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8.

⁵² Ascham's letter to Cecil indicates that this was because 'Certain members of our University took notice of our proceedings in their public sermons and finally brought it about that they prohibited this disputation': (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548.

⁵³ Letter to Cecil (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. I can find no further information concerning Cranmer's response.

⁵⁴ Leader, *History Cambridge*, pp.106-7; H. Craig 'Religious Disputation in Tudor England' *The Rice Institute Pamphlet*, 37, 1 (1950), pp.21-47.

⁵⁵ Leader, *History Cambridge*, pp.98-101. See also references to disputations in St John's College Statutes (Mayor, Statutes).

⁵⁶ Morgan, *History University Cambridge*, pp.128-129.

from learned men freely and without reserve...'.⁵⁷ However, these disputations, as Ascham full well knew, were different. In addition to their highly controversial subject matter, Ascham must have been aware of the increasing role of disputations in facilitating religious reform.⁵⁸ The King's College debates were an obvious example and effectively constituted a prelude to those at John's. More generally, it was set-piece disputations which had played such an important role in Luther's progress towards revolution and launched, for example, the Swiss Reformation in the city of Zurich in the 1520s.⁵⁹ The potential impact of disputations was certainly recognised by contemporaries: Hutchinson (one of the leading participants in these disputations) was of the view that people would learn more from one disputation than from ten sermons.⁶⁰ Disapproval of disputations was expressed by the arch conservative Richard Smith who stressed their power to undermine long-standing truths: 'By the bickering or coming together by disputation and reasoning, they made feeble which before were stronge and sure in the faith... heretics should not be admitted to dispute upon the Scriptures'.⁶¹ There would be further significant theological disputations in 1549 both in Oxford led by Peter Martyr and others in Cambridge; both centred on the Eucharist and, this time, were carefully monitored by government representatives.⁶² Ascham had presided over and driven forward high-profile disputations on a theological issue that had the potential to challenge traditional views of the sacrament.

2.3 Purpose of the *Apologia*

It was just after the 1547 disputations that Ascham wrote up his *Apologia*. The work shows every sign of being a direct response to the debates. In keeping with the disputations, Ascham structured the tract as a rhetorical speech set in the 'Academia' of Cambridge and addressed it to 'learned men'.⁶³ Consistent with his own stance in the disputations, the case

⁵⁷ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548.

⁵⁸ Craig, 'Religious Disputation', p.22.

⁵⁹ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, p.145; and MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p.84.

⁶⁰ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.92.

⁶¹ Smith, *Assertion and Defence of Sacrament of the Altar*, sig.B1^v.

⁶² Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1570 edition), book 9, pp.1590-5 covers the disputations in both Oxford and Cambridge, as does H. Pope 'The Oxford and Cambridge Disputations on the Holy Eucharist 1549' *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 59.5 (1942), pp.403-424 and H. Soames, *The History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (London, 1826-28), pp.502-13. See also *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist, 1549*, Peter Martyr Vermigli trans. and ed., J.C. McLelland (Kirkville, 2000) for the Oxford disputations. For Cambridge, see Baker, *History of St John's College*, pp.125-128. Ascham was not involved in the 1549 disputations, being engaged as Elizabeth's tutor at that time. There would be further disputations between Bucer and conservatives in Cambridge in 1550 concerning the sufficiency of Scripture alone and justification (Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1570 edition), book 9, pp.1590-5).

⁶³ *Apologia*, p.1 and *passim*.

mounted in the *Apologia* was one-sided: his argument condemned the Mass and advocated the restoration of a Biblically-anchored, spiritually-oriented and inclusive Lord's Supper. Ascham referred to the work in a letter to Cecil at the beginning of January 1548, making it clear that the *Apologia* was not just a continuation (albeit on paper) of the theological disputations but the product of a more serious reform agenda: 'All Cambridge needs the spur rather than the checkrein. I have decided, although our disputation was prohibited, yet our inclinations with respect to the matter were somehow stronger than before. For we have written nearly a whole book about the Mass...'.⁶⁴

Ascham's work on the Mass was composed in Latin rather than the vernacular, but this in no way meant that Ascham's tract was less committed to or interested in the business of religious regeneration.⁶⁵ It is evident that Ascham had serious political ambitions for the work. His letter to Cecil indicated that, subject to agreement of Cecil and Cheke, Ascham intended to forward his *Apologia* to the Duke of Somerset.⁶⁶ Somerset had by this point been appointed Chancellor of Cambridge University and Ascham, as Public Orator, may have felt that a write-up (albeit a partial one) of the disputations would be a fitting gift.⁶⁷ However, Somerset was also, after the King, the most powerful man in government and it is much more likely, given Ascham's request for backing by Cecil and Cheke and the far-reaching theological message of the *Apologia*, that Ascham intended the work to constitute a means to push for further and faster reform. The fact that in the same letter to Cecil he also referred to Katherine Parr's *Lamentations of a Sinner* 'which we have just read' is an additional clue to the reform context into which he envisaged his own work naturally slotted.⁶⁸ Within the wider context of the early Edwardine Reformation, a dedication to Somerset of a religiously

⁶⁴ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. Cecil was by this stage Master of Requests to the Duke of Somerset. Regarding the 'we', this was an official letter and Ascham was naturally giving the impression of a united front; nevertheless, for someone who regularly used the first person plural for a singular in many of his private letters, Ascham's 'we' could easily also denote individual effort; see also Ryan, *Ascham*, p.309. To use the first person plural for the singular was also a common classical conceit.

⁶⁵ Lowe makes the point that we cannot artificially segregate the use of Latin and English in determining reform motives: J.A. Lowe, *Richard Smyth and the language of orthodoxy: re-imagining Tudor Catholic polemicism* (Leiden and Boston, 2003), p.10.

⁶⁶ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548.

⁶⁷ As this was January, he may have intended it as a New Year's gift, having patronage in mind. As per appendix 2, Grant in his dedication referred to Ascham's theological work using the interesting description *lucubrationes*, meaning 'reflections/work done by lamp-light'; as Glomski observes, this was a term often used to denote a work intended for a patron: *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons* (London and Canada, 2007), p.241.

⁶⁸ Letter to Cecil (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. Ryan agrees on this point and comments that it is very likely that Ascham hoped to produce some direct results by presenting the treatise to the Protector (*Ascham*, p.95). Parr's *Lamentations of a Sinner* was a work of Protestant piety and published with a preface by Cecil in 1547 after Henry's death.

reforming tract located Ascham as one of the first of a Protestant trend: Loach has attested to the high numbers of reform tracts that were dedicated to Somerset in the first half of the reign.⁶⁹ The fact that Somerset had abandoned the Mass in his household from December 1547 also meant that he was an appropriate recipient of Ascham's attack on the Mass.⁷⁰

However, Ascham's choice of Somerset also hints at divisions within the regime. In his letter to Cecil Ascham referred, somewhat portentously (and mysteriously), to 'the management of the business' and explicitly contrasted Somerset and Cranmer, referring expressly to Cranmer's disinclination to their cause owing to extensive lobbying against them in contrast to a rather more well-disposed Somerset.⁷¹ The simple fact was that, ultimately, Cranmer had been the one to call a halt to the Cambridge disputations, whereas Somerset appears to have been more supportive of Cambridge's role in Eucharistic reform. In a letter that Somerset sent to the University just after the disputations, he clarified that the Proclamation issued at the end of December 1547 concerning the sacrament was not intended to prevent disputations 'whether they be in matters regarding the body and blood of Christ or others' in the colleges and Common Schools.⁷² An indication of a possible rift between the Cranmer and Somerset, at least when it came to reform of the Eucharist, may lie behind Foxe's observation concerning the Dobbe case that had the young Johnian who had openly protested against the Mass not died in prison a pardon would have been forthcoming from Somerset despite Cranmer's decision to incarcerate him.⁷³

We do not know whether Ascham's *Apologia* was in fact ever presented to Somerset. There is no surviving letter from Somerset acknowledging receipt of this work or, indeed, any (extant) acknowledgement from Cecil or Cheke in response to Ascham's letter. Ryan concludes that Cheke and Cecil dissuaded Ascham from presenting the work to Somerset, that it quickly dropped out of sight, and was even abandoned by Ascham who was suddenly faced with the tragic death of his beloved former pupil Grindal in January 1548 and went

⁶⁹ J. Loach/G.W. Barnard and P. Williams (eds.), *Edward VI* (New Haven and London, 1999), p.43.

⁷⁰ Loach, *Edward VI*, p.47.

⁷¹ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548.

⁷² The letter is set out in J.A. Lamb, *A Collection of Letters, Statutes and Other Documents from the MS Library of Corpus Christi College* (Oxford, 1838), pp.85-86.

⁷³ Foxe, *Acts and Monuments, The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1563 edition) book 4, p.741. Brigden also refers to the pardon that would have been forthcoming from Somerset in contrast to Cranmer's reluctance on account of his recent condemnation of Anne Askew: S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989), p.427.

immediately (in February) to tutor Elizabeth.⁷⁴ The absence of any follow-up correspondence regarding the *Apologia* is certainly striking when set against the otherwise very full collection of Ascham's letters during this period, but it does not mean Cecil and Cheke discouraged him or that Somerset did not receive the work. The discretion which Ascham in his letter urged Cecil to use perhaps suggests that any follow-up was not documented.⁷⁵ Putting the opposite case, if Ascham did present his *Apologia* to Somerset, it would have represented a muscular attempt to steer government religious policy and a potential challenge to Cranmer's own programme and ideas about the nature of reform. Whatever the position, it is hard to deny that the parameters of the Eucharistic debate as set out by Ascham had a profound and lasting influence: similar propositions were used in the officially licensed disputations which took place at the Cambridge University before the King's commissioners in 1549.⁷⁶ Furthermore, many of the doctrinal adjustments to the Mass advocated in the *Apologia* were actually enacted in the Book of Common Prayer of 1549 (via the Act of Uniformity 2 and 3 Edward VI c.1).⁷⁷ Though the Book of Common Prayer is often referred to as a Cranmerian project, some argue that its origins are less straightforward.⁷⁸ Indeed, Alford has argued that four years later, in 1551, sacramental disputations held in private London residences of first Cecil and then Richard Morison, at which a high number of Cambridge men were present, established the foundation of the Book of Common Prayer of 1552.⁷⁹

It is possible that Ascham's aspirations to exercise some kind of influence on the religious policy of government were part of a wider movement of pressure from senior University men. Ascham's express involvement of two fellow Cambridge men, Cecil and Cheke, in his *Apologia* project was also no coincidence. These men, like Ascham, (although their authority

⁷⁴ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.101

⁷⁵ Ascham letter to Cecil (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548.

⁷⁶ The two central propositions of the 1549 disputations built naturally on the arguments of Ascham's *Apologia*. These were: (i) transubstantiation could not be proven by Scripture or the consensus of the old Fathers; and (ii) in the Supper, there is no other sacrifice of Christ but only a commemoration of his death and thanksgiving. For details of the 1549 visitation and disputations, see: Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1570 edition), book 9, pp.1593-5; Baker, *History of St. John's College*, pp.125-128; C.H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842), pp.28-31.

⁷⁷ For example, private masses were abolished, elevation and adoration were abandoned, the elements were separated from the sacrifice of Christ, and there were provisions to ensure that the sacrament was a communion and never received by the priest alone: MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.410-421; and F. Proctor and W.H. Frere, *A new history of the book of common prayer* (MacMillan, 1919).

⁷⁸ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.414.

⁷⁹ Alford, *Burghley*, p.45. The minutes of these meetings are held (in hard copy and online) in the Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 102, ff. 253-8, 259-66. Ascham was not present at these as he was, by then, already in Germany.

at Court was already established) had clear ambitions to steer the religious Reformation in a particular direction. The networks of scholarly men from the Universities in giving shape to the Reformation should not be underestimated.⁸⁰

This was certainly the case with Cecil. Alumnus of St John's and pupil of Cheke and Ascham, Cecil quickly became a key figure in the Somerset circle at the start of Edward's reign and indeed was so close to Somerset that he was referred to as 'the duke's agent'.⁸¹ The extent to which he fully harnessed the intellectual property of Cambridge University in his promotion of the Protestant Reformation is well recognised.⁸² The manuscript of a letter not included in any other editions of Ascham's correspondence but clearly in Ascham's hand that was sent to Cecil in the name of St John's College is an excellent reflection of the leverage the College could exercise over a former member now at Court.⁸³ The letter stressed Cecil's close bond with the college and firmly requested that, just as Cecil had undertaken to advance the beginnings of 'the business' (it is unclear what), he would now bring it to its conclusion.⁸⁴

Less adequately documented is Cheke's agency in pushing the Reformation in an Protestant direction. Even before Edward came to the throne, he was using his classical skills to this end and it is very likely that Cheke's preface to and Latin translation of Plutarch's *peri deisidaimonias* ('On Superstition'), which he dedicated to Henry VIII in 1546, was intended to give ballast to an evangelical campaign against particular rituals such as creeping to the cross on Good Friday and more generally to warn about true and false religion.⁸⁵ The impact of yet more theologically-oriented material which he authored, including certain private letters and a tract on the Church, *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, which exists only in manuscript, has not been assessed but seems likely.⁸⁶ It has been suggested that Cheke's tutoring of Edward

⁸⁰ Alford, *Kingship*, pp.132-134.

⁸¹ Alford, *Burghley*, *passim* and p.33.

⁸² Alford, *Burghley*, chapters 3 and 4.

⁸³ British Library MS Lansdowne 2/16, letter to Cecil, dated 28 December 1547.

⁸⁴ The letter contains no further details of what this business entails, but it is likely to be connected to the various religious disruptions that occurred during 1547.

⁸⁵ J.F. McDiarmid 'John Cheke's Preface to *De Superstitione*' *J.E.H.*, 48 (1997), pp.100-120; McDiarmid has been working tirelessly to raise the profile of Cheke's contributions to the Edwardine Reformation. I thank him for copies of two of his papers 'The Cambridge Humanists and the Edwardine Reformation' and '*Hoc quod in Cicerone excellens est*: The Protestant Ciceronianism of Sir John Cheke'.

⁸⁶ A. Overell, *Italian Reform and English Reformations, c.1535-1585* (Aldershot, 2008), p.130. *Tractatus de Ecclesia* (undated) is contained in Harleian MS. 418, f. 179.34 and will be discussed by J.F. McDiarmid in '“To content god quietly” The troubles of Sir John Cheke under Mary' in E. Evenden (ed.), 1556-7, *The Crucible of English Confessional Conflict* (forthcoming).

had a formative role in the King's religious outlook.⁸⁷ Indeed, in the summer of 1547, he was appointed one of the most intimate advisors of the King as a gentleman of the privy chamber.⁸⁸ His appointment as one of the lead commissioners for the visitation to Cambridge University in 1548/9 represented another important opportunity to synthesise national and University religious business.⁸⁹

Furthermore, evidence also points to the high levels of interest and involvement Cheke from his position at Court had in the 1547 Cambridge disputations on the Eucharist. Strype, in his *Life of Cheke*, was certainly under no illusions that ultimate responsibility for the disputations on the Eucharist lay with him.⁹⁰ Letters sent from Ascham to Cheke at the end of December 1547 further support this.⁹¹ Ascham, with direct reference to the disputations, thanked Cheke for promoting the College's cause with the Lord Protector.⁹² His words also betrayed a shared mission, Ascham undertaking to:

labour more in fulfilling whatever you want me to do... You were always of the opinion that individuals should so labour in individual tasks guided by their wit; that the universal society of learning might be contained in this our society; that the whole Christian doctrine be drunk chiefly from the fountains of the Scriptures themselves or certainly always derived from those who touch most closely those founts; and that we should take the greatest pains not to derive anything from that filth and Pelagian bilgewater to the infecting of these studies...

and quoting back to Cheke one of his own aphorisms: 'Cambridge men are behind in many things'.⁹³

Certain sections of Cambridge University may have been exerting considerable pressure on the religious policy of government at the start of Edward's reign, but, with greater influence, came greater scrutiny. Official intervention in theological developments in Cambridge started to become increasingly apparent. In 1549 there was a royal visitation to the University; the remit was broad and the wording of the commission included a right on the

⁸⁷ ODNB for Cheke.

⁸⁸ Hatch is of the opinion that the abovementioned letter from Somerset to Cambridge University ((L) G:vol.1, 77/H:78, December 1547) is written 'in the hand of Cheke' (as per the sub-heading for his translation of this letter).

⁸⁹ It is evident that some of the Injunctions given to the University during that visitation were in Cheke's hand (McDiarmid paper - 'The Cambridge Humanists and the Edwardine Reformation'). Cheke was also appointed Professor of Divinity at the University in this year.

⁹⁰ Strype, *Life of Cheke*, pp.11-12.

⁹¹ Ascham letters to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 78/H:80, December 1547 and (L) G:vol.1, 79/H:79, end of 1547.

⁹² (L) G:vol.1, 78/H:80, 1547.

⁹³ Letter to Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 79/H:79, 1547. The last part was written in Greek as though to highlight the importance but also the sensitivity of the sentiment.

part of the commissioners to: 'restrain those they find rebellious or contumacious; expel masters or fellows they deem unfit; change the terms of divine offices, disputations, public lectures...and substitute others more reasonable'.⁹⁴ The set-piece disputations held as part of this visitation were also far more carefully choreographed than those that had taken place in 1547 and were watched by the royal visitors. In 1548 Ascham expressed his disquiet about the prohibition on the appointment of fellows until further notice imposed on Cambridge.⁹⁵ Future statutes under both Mary and Elizabeth would also regulate disputations much more carefully.⁹⁶ It is also sobering to note that during the span of the Tudor Reformation generally, of the 14 colleges in Cambridge, only Gonville and Caius did not lose its master.

2.4 1577/8 Publication of *Apologia*

Ascham's *Apologia* remained in manuscript. It was not until 1577/8 that a version of it, along with other Latin works of his, were published posthumously by Edward Grant.⁹⁷ The circumstances of its publication during the Elizabethan reign provide fresh insights into the religious atmosphere of the 1570s and shed additional, albeit retrospective, light on the purpose and tenor of the original work.

It should perhaps come as no surprise that Ascham did not himself decide to publish his *Apologia*. Despite the quantity of publications at the start of Edward's reign, there remained a strong manuscript culture.⁹⁸ Nor was it out of keeping with Ascham's general track record: of his eight works, only one, the *Toxophilus*, was published in his lifetime. For contemporaries the manuscript form was often the best way to safeguard the integrity of the contents.⁹⁹ And, as one of Ascham's early biographers, Johnson, also observed, there was little incentive in publishing works at that time as the printers gave so little in return.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Cooper, *Annals*, p.24.

⁹⁵ Ascham letter to Gardiner (L) G:vol.1, 80, end of 1547 / H: 86, after April 1548. The letter from Edward VI to this effect is printed in Lamb, *Documents*, p.102.

⁹⁶ Morgan, *History University Cambridge*, p.129.

⁹⁷ The printed version is in octavo size. There was no second edition. In some of the editions, the publication date of 1577 has been amended to 1578. According to D. McKitterick, 1577 was simply a misprint and altered in manuscript for accuracy: *Old Books, New Technologies: the representation, conservation and transformation of books since 1700* (London and New York, 2013), p.76. Grant's preface and dedication are set out in appendix 2.

⁹⁸ J.C. Crick and A. Walsham, *The uses of script and print, 1300-1700* (Cambridge, 2004) see introduction. Pettegree comments that many early printed books often tried to make themselves look like manuscripts: A. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge, 2005), p.129.

⁹⁹ A. Johns, *The Nature of the Book: print and knowledge in the making* (Chicago and London, 1998), p.458.

¹⁰⁰ *Biographical Writings Johnson*, ed., Fleeman, p.510.

The man who came eventually to publish the work was Edward Grant, expert in Latin and Greek, member of St John's College and Headmaster of Westminster School.¹⁰¹ He had already, in 1576, published an edition of Ascham's letters together with a biography and dedicated it to Queen Elizabeth. In 1577/8 he published in a single volume the *Apologia*, the *Themata* and Ascham's translation of Oecumenius' Pauline commentaries. The printed version of the *Apologia* was, as far as we can guess, like the manuscript, incomplete. This volume of his theological works was dedicated by Grant to Robert Dudley, son of the former Duke of Northumberland and close favourite of Elizabeth.

Why Grant was so determined to preserve the fame of Roger Ascham and, moreover, considered Ascham's theological Latin works worthy of publication some thirty years after their composition is an interesting question. An easy response would be to give secular educational humanism as the reason: an educator and fine classical scholar himself, Grant surely admired Ascham's linguistic accomplishments and his role as a teacher.¹⁰² However, closer examination points to rather more nuanced motivations that were wholly bound up with the religious Reformation. Grant was not only a humanist but also a profoundly religious man and an ordained minister.¹⁰³ In addition to Ascham, the person whose death he also lamented in Latin verse was Bishop John Jewel.¹⁰⁴ Grant's preface to Ascham's work was by no means limited to humanistic concerns; it described at length Ascham's virulent attack on the Mass and the priesthood. The inclusion of a wholehearted approval of Ascham's attack points to his own reformist intentions; after outlining the contents of the *Apologia*, namely the attack on the Mass and the priesthood, Grant added:

And not unjustly. For the Mass has troubled, with multiple tricks, deceits, witchcraft and frauds, not just one night but the darknesses of many ages, not just the home of one man but the governance of the whole world. It has deceived, bewitched and robbed not just common, simple and inexperienced men but also some of those that are powerful and shrewd. And what has it not (done)? ...there never existed any licence so prominent, any force of crimes so obvious which did not have secure and sure protection in the sanctity of the Mass.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ ODNB for Grant; he matriculated as sizar at the college in 1564. Between 1573 and 1589, he was awarded MA, BD and DD at Cambridge and presented books to the college in 1579. Wood rated him as 'the most noted Latinist and Grecian of his time': A. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (London, 1721), vol.1, p.711.

¹⁰² Grant had, just two years before in 1575, published his own Greek Grammar, the *Graecae Linguae Spicilegium*. His preface (appendix 2) also extols the refinement of Ascham's Latin.

¹⁰³ ODNB for Grant.

¹⁰⁴ ODNB for Grant.

¹⁰⁵ See appendix 2.

The dedication of the 1577/8 publication to Dudley, Earl of Leicester, (rather than to, say, Elizabeth again) is also suggestive. Dudley was an important champion of reform during the 1570s and Grant's repeated application of the classical name 'Cynosura' to Dudley, a forceful and learned acknowledgement of the fact.¹⁰⁶ Cynosura, according to classical mythology, nursed Zeus when he was being hidden from his tyrannical father, Cronus. In gratitude, Zeus placed her in the heavens as the constellation Ursa Minor. At a time when classical allusions were commonly used for their hidden meanings, a reasonable interpretation is that Dudley represented the nursemaid for the path of true reform (whilst the link to Ursa Minor recalls the Dudley crest of the bear and ragged staff). A further clue to the tract's status was the identity of the printer. It was Henry Middleton who specialised in printing radical reform tracts from or inspired by the European Reformation by men such as Calvin, Bullinger and Hooper.¹⁰⁷

Even in the 1570s, the Reformation was not, as far as many were concerned, complete. As outlined in chapter 1, Ascham himself was, at the end of his life, showing signs of disaffection with the pace of Elizabeth's reform programme. Aston refers to the late 1570s as a backlash 'phase of reforming purification' in which the reign of Edward and its reform tracts were held up as an example.¹⁰⁸ Concerns were intensifying about possible regression towards popery and there appeared, certainly to some in Cambridge, to be a renewed fondness of the Catholic Mass.¹⁰⁹ Foxe's 1570 edition of *Acts and Monuments* bore eloquent testimony to these some of these fears: an antipapal diatribe was specially added to this edition as an appendix.¹¹⁰ Elizabeth herself also gave out some conflicting signals about her own commitment to Protestantism; certainly, the 1559 Prayer Book had not been as advanced as the 1552 Edwardine Prayer Book regarding the Mass.¹¹¹ There was increasing apprehension about a possible marriage alliance with the Duke of Anjou of France, a country which had just a few years earlier been responsible for the massacre of many Protestant

¹⁰⁶ The circle which formed around Dudley in the 1570s was ideologically bound by their progressive Protestantism: C. Shrank, *Writing the Nation in Reformation England, 1530-1580* (Oxford, 2004) p.203; J. Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1998) p.258.

¹⁰⁷ For Middleton, see R.B. McKerrow, *Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland, 1485-1640* (London, 1949). *Fifty Godly Sermons* of Bullinger were printed by Middleton in the same year, 1577, as Ascham's *Apologia*. The publisher was Francis Coldocke. It was not printed *cum privilegio*.

¹⁰⁸ M. Aston, *The King's Bedpost: Reformation and iconography in a Tudor group portrait* (Cambridge, 1993) p.159. She observes how Foxe also devoted himself to a single-minded eulogy of Edward's commendations and virtues, stressing, in the way the 1563 edition had not, his role as Josiah in purging the church.

¹⁰⁹ Morgan, *History University Cambridge*, p.449.

¹¹⁰ Aston, *King's Bedpost*, p.140.

¹¹¹ Guy, *Tudor England*, pp.252 and 262.

believers.¹¹² Anxieties were further exacerbated by the influx of specially trained seminary priests to the country whose main aim was to galvanise Roman Catholicism across Europe.¹¹³ In 1577, the year Grant chose to publish the *Apologia*, the first of many executions of seminary priests took place.¹¹⁴ A review of the works printed in 1577 highlights a significant surge in anti-papal sentiment, both in re-prints and new works.¹¹⁵

Feelings of frustration about the incompleteness of reform under Elizabeth are frequently attributed to a growing Puritan movement.¹¹⁶ Whilst historians have warned against speaking of 'Puritanism' or 'Puritans' in too definitive a way, it may be that Ascham's *Apologia* was being used to buttress such a cause.¹¹⁷ Dudley is often referred to as a key patron of a Puritan outlook that was gaining considerable momentum.¹¹⁸ Ascham's anticlerical attitudes in his *Apologia* - his criticisms of the episcopacy and focus on the presbytery - appropriately echoed (or could be made to correspond to) similar Puritan preoccupations.¹¹⁹ At this point in Elizabeth's reign there were many Puritans, contributing to the growing rift between the Queen and her bishops.¹²⁰ In 1572 the *Admonition*, a bitter denunciation of clerical hierarchy, was published by two Cambridge men, Thomas Lever and Anthony Gilby.¹²¹

Dudley himself had advertised his consternation over the shortcomings of the clergy, viewing, *inter alia*, his role as Chancellor of Oxford as essentially one of expediting the improvement of the clergy through preaching.¹²² Ascham was perhaps now viewed as a natural ally for Puritans: historians have highlighted that two key places in Ascham's life - St

¹¹² D.M. Loades, *Elizabeth I* (London and New York, 2003), pp.209-213.

¹¹³ J.A. Wagner & S.W. Schmid, (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Tudor England* (California, 2012), p.996. Haigh suggests that this fear was more imagined than real: *Reformation Revised*, p.190.

¹¹⁴ viz. Cuthbert Mayne. This was followed up by an Act of 1585 against Jesuits and Seminary Priests: 27 Eliz, c.2, as printed in Gee and Hardy, *Documents English Church*, pp.485-492.

¹¹⁵ A number of anti-papal works of Thomas Becon were re-printed; Bullinger's sermon on the Lord's Supper was printed as a single work; Haddon's anti-Roman rejoinder to Osorio was re-printed; a number of works by William Fulke, the Puritan divine, against popish Catholicism were published for the first time.

¹¹⁶ Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p.25 and Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church*, p.1.

¹¹⁷ M. Todd *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge, 1987); Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p.27; Rylie, *Being Protestant*, pp.6-8.

¹¹⁸ He was viewed as the 'patron-general' of Puritans according to Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p.53.

¹¹⁹ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp.101-120; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p.1.

¹²⁰ W.P. Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation: The Struggle for a Stable Settlement of Religion* (Cambridge, 1968), chapter 5.

¹²¹ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp.118-120. Gilby took BA and MA at Christ's College during the first half of the 1530s where he gained a reputation for his skill in the biblical languages of Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Thereafter, he became a vocal theological reformer, Edwardine preacher and Marian exile (ODNB).

¹²² Adams, *Leicester and the Court*, p.230.

John's College and Strasbourg - were the main strong-holds of Puritanism.¹²³ In any case, Grant's publication of the *Apologia* some twenty years into Elizabeth's reign raises some interesting questions about contemporary perspectives of the tract's role in the reform movement and its ability to make a difference.

2.5 Ascham's Authorship

It has been assumed thus far that Ascham is the author of the Latin work *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*. However, one of the great challenges, as with many tracts from the early modern period, is the proof of authenticity. The utilisation of another's name was not uncommon in the sixteenth century and so, even though the title of the tract explicitly names Ascham, how can we really be sure that he wrote it? A serious drawback in respect of the *Apologia* is the lack of a manuscript with which to verify the printed version. Printed versions of the tract are held at the British Library, the Bodleian, Cambridge University Library, the Henry Huntington Library and Hatfield House, but there is no corresponding manuscript in their collections. St John's College library, whilst it holds some Ascham manuscripts, does not have the *Apologia*. Given that Grant, the man responsible for assembling the printed volume of Ascham's Latin works in 1577/8, was headmaster at Westminster School, their archives were another possible repository for the manuscript, but, again, searches proved fruitless. This was also true of searches of the Cecil papers and National Archives.¹²⁴ There is also no trace of Ascham's last will and testament which may have contained information about the work's immediate destination.¹²⁵ Grant, in his life of Ascham, suggests that Ascham's writings were scattered around and in no order at the end of his life (in 1568), but he must have had access to the manuscript of the *Apologia* in 1577 in order to publish it.¹²⁶ It is clear from Grant's dedication to Elizabeth of the 1576 Ascham letters that these, at least, were personally handed to Grant by Ascham's eldest son, Giles.¹²⁷ It is evident too that some of Ascham's papers were dispersed among St John's students and alumni. In 1726 a fellow of St John's, John Bernard, presented to the college a manuscript version of Ascham's translation of Oecumenius' *Expositiones* (on the letter to Philomen) which had, in turn, been

¹²³ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p.127; Hudson, *Cambridge Connection*, p.47; Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, p.41; Linehan, *St John's*, pp.70-3 and 78.

¹²⁴ The Cecil papers in HMC Salisbury volumes (British History Online Catalogue) and State Papers (in the National Register of Archives) especially SP12.

¹²⁵ Grant indicates that Ascham did make a will: *Vita*, para.2.

¹²⁶ Grant, *Vita*, para.2.

¹²⁷ Grant's dedication G:vol.3, p.295; it is in Latin and has no corresponding translation. In this dedication Grant also observes that 'some of his [Ascham's] letters are missing, various are lost, several are burnt, or torn by through negligence' (G:vol.3, p.301, as per my translation).

inscribed by Thomas Baker, another graduate and fellow of St John's, at the end of the seventeenth century.¹²⁸

There is evidence which points positively to Ascham's authorship. Grant, the editor of Ascham's *Apologia* only thirty or so years after its composition, was in no doubt that the Ascham was responsible for the work and in the preface stated categorically that: 'E.G. dedicates and consecrates this theological work by Roger Ascham'.¹²⁹ The abovementioned letter that Ascham wrote to Cecil of 5 January 1548 which outlined the disputations can also assist in corroborating his authorship.¹³⁰ In the letter, Ascham referred to a work that sprang from these disputations, describing it as 'an almost complete book'; the *Apologia* was indeed incomplete.¹³¹ He also explained that the central question in the disputations had been '...about the Mass, whether it was the same as our Lord's Supper or not'. In the *Apologia*, this same premise was twice repeated, the work then being devoted to arguing that the Mass was not the same as the Lord's Supper.¹³² The fact that the son and wife of William Cecil, Robert, and his mother, Mildred, possessed a copy of the 1577 printed *Apologia*, now held at Hatfield House, further reinforces the connection between the *Apologia* and this letter to Cecil from Ascham.¹³³

There is one historian who has disputed (on the basis of the wording of the letter to Cecil) the attribution of the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* to Ascham. Katterfeld, who produced a monograph in German in 1879 on Ascham, has suggested that whilst Ascham did write up the 1547 disputations, this write-up was not the same as the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*.¹³⁴ His reasons for believing that there were two separate documents are, as Ryan points out, based on some highly unconvincing argumentation. This included, for example, the fact that the *Apologia* was not formally addressed to Somerset yet Ascham's letter to

¹²⁸ MS L.3 (James, 360); in Thomas Baker's hand are the Latin words *Libellus hic scriptus est, tam manu, quam opera ipsius Ascami* ('This little book was written as much as by the graft, as by the zeal of Ascham himself') and presented to the College by John Bernard whose inscription also appears on the document.

¹²⁹ See appendix 2.

¹³⁰ (L) G:vol.1, 83/H:82, 1548. Hatch, in his footnotes to letter H:82, states that the manuscript of the letter is preserved in John's College, Cambridge, but neither I, nor the head of the Old Library of the College, have been able to locate it. The version of the letter printed as an appendix in Strype's *Cranmer*, vol.2, 37, is based on the original and clearly confirms that it is from Ascham. I discuss dating below.

¹³¹ The term *libellus* could very well have applied to the *Apologia*: Ascham described other works of his, such as his Oecumenius commentary project and his *Toxophilus*, as a *libellus*: Ascham letters: to Seton (L) G:vol.1, 11/H:13, 1542; and to Wriothesley (L) G:vol.1, 33/H:36, 1545.

¹³² *Apologia*, pp.14 and 26.

¹³³ The copy contains the autograph signatures of Robert and Mildred Burghley. Robert was also educated at St John's College.

¹³⁴ Katterfeld, *Roger Ascham*, pp.63-67.

Cecil indicated that his tract would be.¹³⁵ This argument does not stand up: Ascham told Cecil in his letter that the book would be presented (*offerre*), not addressed, to Somerset and the author of the *Apologia* clearly stated 'I also surrender myself to the most noble Duke Edward of Somerset, the very worthy Chancellor of our University'.¹³⁶ Katterfeld seems to have been splitting hairs here and, in any case, conceded that the work Ascham referred to in the letter would have substantially resembled the work called the *Apologia*.¹³⁷

Certain similarities between the *Apologia* and other works and letters which are accepted as Ascham's further support his authorship of the *Apologia*. For example, in both his *Toxophilus* of 1545 and the *Apologia*, Ascham applied the distinctive Aristotelian pattern of genesis, use, misuse, corruption.¹³⁸ Both works too highlighted the crime of coin debasement.¹³⁹ The striking Pauline exclamation '*ô altitudo!*' which he used in the *Apologia* also appeared as an annotation in the Ambrose text.¹⁴⁰ In support of an argument in his *Apologia* about the importance of Scripture, Ascham had quoted Psalm 44: *Lingua mea calamus Scribae velociter scribentis*; he used this precise Latin wording in the dedication of his *Scholemaster* to Elizabeth.¹⁴¹ The distinctive insult 'Babylonian owls' he had used of his religious adversaries in a letter he wrote in 1547 he also deployed in the same way in the *Apologia*.¹⁴² Question-marks over Ascham's authorship start to fade further when one takes into account the existence of the manuscript versions of two of his other theological works which appeared in the same printed volume as the *Apologia*: his translations of the *Expositiones* of Oecumenius on the letters of Paul to Titus and Philemon. The corresponding manuscripts for these expositions are housed at the Bodleian Library in Oxford and St John's College Library in Cambridge respectively.¹⁴³ Letters of dedication in the unmistakable italic hand of Ascham preface each work and are both signed off by him.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁵ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.310.

¹³⁶ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.310. *Apologia*, p.26.

¹³⁷ Katterfeld, *Roger Ascham*, pp.66-67.

¹³⁸ It provides the structure for part 1 of his *Toxophilus*, G:vol.2; *Apologia*, p.37.

¹³⁹ *Toxophilus* G:vol.2, p.51; *Apologia*, p.38. Ascham was a keen numismatist and in much of his personal correspondence he discussed coins he had seen, sometimes even enclosing a coin as a gift to a recipient.

¹⁴⁰ *Apologia*, p.9; Ambrose, *De Vocatione*, p.35. Paul uses the word in Romans 11:33.

¹⁴¹ It translates as 'my tongue is the pen of a ready writer'. *Apologia*, p.123, and Ascham's dedication in October 1566 of the *Scholemaster* in G:vol.3, p.66.

¹⁴² (L) G:vol.1, 76, p.141/V&H:26, 1547 and *Apologia*, p.123.

¹⁴³ Bodleian, Rawlinson MS D.1317 and St John's College MS L.3 (James, 360). The Titus letter is to Goodrich, the Philomen to Seton. There are some discrepancies between the printed versions of the Oecumenius commentaries and the manuscript versions. In the Philemon these are very few and minor and it looks as though the printer has simply missed a couple of phrases by accident. The discrepancies between the Titus versions are ones of vocabulary and word order, but do not alter the substance; it may be that Ascham had produced more than one version of this ambitious work; there were similarly differences between the manuscript

2.6 Date of Composition

As important a consideration is the dating of the *Apologia*. Although published in 1577/8, internal evidence indicates that its composition was much earlier. Precision regarding the date also matters because a central argument of this thesis concerns the ground-breaking nature of Ascham's critique of the Mass which anticipated, by some way, the 1549 Book of Common Prayer.

Assuming that the book on the Mass to which Ascham refers in his letter to Cecil of January 1548 was the *Apologia*, it would appear that Ascham was in the process of composing it at around that time. The reference in the *Apologia* itself to Somerset as Chancellor of the University marks an obvious *terminus a quo* since he was only elected to the post on 14 November 1547.¹⁴⁵ Ryan considers January 1548 as the most likely month of the *Apologia*'s composition.¹⁴⁶ January is also the month that detail in the *Apologia* itself points to: at one point Ascham wrote 'Besides, this day itself on which we now write these things is called the "Circumcision of the Lord"...'.¹⁴⁷ The Feast of the Circumcision was January 1.¹⁴⁸

To place reliance on the January 1548 letter for the purposes of helping to date the *Apologia* of course raises a further issue, namely the question of which dating system was being used.¹⁴⁹ At the time Ascham wrote this letter, the start of the year technically began on 25th March (Lady Day) as opposed to 1st January; the dating system later introduced by Pope Gregory in 1582 and adopted in England in 1752 was not yet in place.¹⁵⁰ Even though many countries in Western Europe prior to the introduction of the Gregorian calendar were in fact

of the *Scholemaster* and the printed copy (G.B. Parks 'The First Draft of Ascham's *Scholemaster*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 1 (1937-1938), pp.313-327).

¹⁴⁴ Ascham's handwriting is considered a model of the italic style: J.S. Dees, 'Recent Studies in Ascham' *English Literary Renaissance* 10 (1980), p.305. There is also Ascham's beautifully engraved autograph above the fireplace in the room at the top of staircase A in St. John's College, Cambridge. The manuscripts of his that survive are so exquisitely written that they have been mistaken, more than once, for a printed book (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.301).

¹⁴⁵ The letter from the University announcing his election is dated 14 November and the Duke's letter signifying his acceptance the 9 December (Cooper, *Annals*, vol.2, p.6).

¹⁴⁶ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.310.

¹⁴⁷ *Apologia*, p.136.

¹⁴⁸ This internal evidence was not referred to by Ryan.

¹⁴⁹ Ascham's letter to Cecil clearly states its date as 5 January, 1548.

¹⁵⁰ R. Poole, *Time's Alteration: Calendar Reform in Early Modern England* (London, 1998).

treating 1 January as the first day of the year, one must be open to the possibility that in letters like Ascham's the year stated was actually one year later.¹⁵¹

On the basis of internal evidence, there can be little doubt that Ascham treated the month of January to mark the start of his year and that we can accept the date given at face value without any further calculation. A number of his letters which are dated January or February of a particular year must apply to that year and not to the following one. For example, two letters he wrote just after the one to Cecil, dated 22 January and 12 February 1548 respectively, concerned the premature death of his former pupil and friend, William Grindal, a death which had clearly shaken Ascham who expressed his grief at some length. Grindal died at the start of 1548 and such sentiments would surely not be appropriately expressed the following year.¹⁵² In the letter to Cheke, he referred to his potential appointment as Elizabeth's new tutor in place of Grindal. Ascham was appointed tutor to Elizabeth before 1549 so, again, 1548 cannot be taken to be 1549. More likely still is that Ascham was following the custom of royal letter-writers of the period and using the regnal year (which started on the date of accession of a particular monarch) to date his correspondence; Edward's first year ran from 28 January 1547 - 27 January 1548.¹⁵³ It is perfectly reasonable to suppose Ascham would follow this protocol, having been an official letter writer for the University for a number of years before this. In any case, to read the letter to Cecil as having been composed in 1549 would make considerably less sense than 1548.¹⁵⁴ It is unlikely that Ascham would wait a year after the Cambridge 1547 disputations to write his tract, especially since he referred to them with such urgency at the end of 1547.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, to date it 1549 would be to ignore the very important fact that Ascham took up an all-consuming tutoring post to the princess Elizabeth in January 1548 which lasted till 1550. Grant likewise explained in his dedication that the reason the work was incomplete was because Ascham himself was called away to the business of tutoring Elizabeth.¹⁵⁶ It is hardly likely that he would have had time to compose his *Apologia* during the first year of this post, a period in

¹⁵¹ When Ascham's main biographer, Ryan, and the two main editors of his letters, Giles and Hatch, confirm that Ascham was using the 'new style of dating', they presumably mean that he was following this pre-Gregorian convention of using 1 January as New Year's Day (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.296; G:vol. 1, preface, p.viii; and Hatch 'Ascham Letters' *passim* and note to H:221). Hatch and Giles confirm the date of the letter to Cecil as 5 January 1548 (*qua* 1548).

¹⁵² Letters to: Elizabeth (L) G:vol.1, 84/V&H:28, January 1548; and Cheke (L) G:vol.1, 85/V&H:29, February 1548.

¹⁵³ J. Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: manuscript letters and the culture and practices of letter-writing, 1512-1635* (Basingstoke, 2012), p.130.

¹⁵⁴ Hatch and Giles confirm the date of the letter to Cecil as 5 January 1548 (*qua* 1548).

¹⁵⁵ For example in his letter to Bill, (L) G:vol.1, 82/H:81, 1547/8.

¹⁵⁶ appendix 2.

which, as historians have pointed out, he wrote strikingly few letters compared to the rest of his life.¹⁵⁷ In sum, the weight of the evidence points to a composition date at the end of Edward's first year on the throne.

¹⁵⁷ V&H: p.109.

Chapter 3: Ascham the Theologian

In Reformation history writing, Ascham has never been thought of primarily, or at all, as a theologian and reformer. His near uniform designation as a lay humanist has precluded any analysis of him or his works in relation to the Reformation beyond applying some superficial labels about his confessional identity.¹ When it comes to theology, there is not one positive assessment of Ascham's contribution. Giles, in his 1865 edition of the whole works of Ascham, wrote in his introduction: 'It would be an affront to the reader's patience to rescue any of [Ascham's] theological treatises from merited oblivion by reprinting them with his other works'.² Ascham's main modern biographer, Ryan, devoted only 4 out of 350 pages to his *Apologia* and, in general, was largely dismissive of Ascham's theological achievements, tending instead to dwell on his disappointments and failures in the theological sphere.³ According to Ascham's entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, he was a man reluctant to get involved in religious controversy; the article denigrates his *Apologia* as an exercise in rhetoric rather than 'reasoned theological argument', and concludes that 'He was no theologian'.⁴

Chapter 1, however, I hope, went some way to counter this tendency to dissociate Ascham from theology. It drew attention to the extent to which Ascham was, during his early life and his long tenure at St John's College Cambridge, immersed in a community deeply concerned with theology, how, during his time there, he embarked upon a range of theological projects, such as his Oecumenius translation and his *Themata Theologica*, and the number of close ties he had with a number of prominent divines. His commitment to theological reform that first manifested itself in a public stance against the Pope would, in due course, feed into an enduring engagement with the German Reformation. Furthermore, both at Cambridge and afterwards, he thought of his pursuit of classical studies as religious in nature; he was a man as comfortable annotating a work of Aristophanes or Isocrates as he was a copy of the New Testament or Ambrose's work on the freedom of the will and predestination, and he himself would not have seen these as separate interests.

¹ See chapter 1.

² G:vol.1, pp. iii-iv.

³ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.96-99.

⁴ ODNB for Ascham by Rosemary O'Day.

Ascham's *Apologia* is the most eloquent testimony of his full involvement in and commitment to theological reform.⁵ It represented an assertive interjection into one of the most controversial theological conflicts of the day, an issue of central importance to the Protestant cause, the Eucharist. His theological argumentation was authoritative and uncompromising in its outright rejection of the Mass and all its constituent parts. In his bullish approach and polemical tone, he had much in common with other reformers campaigning for radical religious change. He also shared many of their progressive doctrinal convictions, placing the *Apologia* at the forefront of Reformed thinking relative to its time. Certainly, his doctrinal stance appeared for the most part to match and even anticipate the official line of what is generally agreed to be a staunchly Protestant regime. In his utilization of the Ten Commandments as an organizing structure for his tract, he stood shoulder to shoulder with a wider Protestant campaign to harness the Decalogue. In his bold conflation of the campaign against private masses with an outright rejection of the Mass, he can legitimately be described as a pioneer in Protestant thought. In terms of confessional identity, the label Ryan applied to Ascham of 'relatively conservative Protestant' seems far from appropriate.⁶

Ascham was also a capable and experienced theologian. His honed theological antennae allowed him to react sensitively not only to the more obvious contemporary theological themes that dominated the contemporary religious landscape, like anti-popery and iconoclasm, but also to more esoteric lines of argument such as those concerned with Malachi and Melchizedech. Further, his responses to and perpetuation of older theological quarrels reflected no amateurish opportunism but a longer term interest in some of the most pivotal religious debates of the Reformation thus far, including the Fisher-Luther rift and the Pighian controversies. His European-oriented references to Calvin, for example, or the problematic attempts at reform in Cologne, were those of a man who had a good level of awareness about the wider Reformation. Furthermore, the *Apologia* revealed Ascham to be someone who was both experienced and competent in Scriptural exegesis, totally at ease with theological language and its formulation, and equally at home in the field of patristics.

Finally, Ascham was a highly individual theologian. His theological conclusions were based on his own independent scholarship that included detailed textual reading of the Gospel in the

⁵ Grant in the heading of the dedication to Dudley described the work as 'theological' (see appendix 2).

⁶ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.101.

original Greek and his private reading of the Fathers. His independence was coupled with a strong set of principles - a paramount belief in the purity of the original language of the Bible and its sufficiency. His fierce criticism of human doctrine (which could include the Fathers) which was at odds with Scripture had an almost fundamentalist feel to it. His *sui generis* theology, anchored as it was in Scripture and scholarship, had an authority of its own, one sufficient to rival that of both government and Church if necessary.

3.1 Tone

The strident stance on the Eucharist that Ascham took in his *Apologia* at the time he did, at the very start of Edward's reign, required courage and reflected serious religious resolve. The new government under Edward, at least to begin with, affirmed the Henrician *status quo* and proceeded in a highly cautious way in respect of the Eucharist, effectively gagging all public discussion of the matter.⁷ Even in Cambridge, government control was acutely felt. The risks associated in publicly articulating a position on the Eucharist were reflected in the sentiments of two of Ascham's contemporaries at the University. William Turner would refer (only half-jokingly) to the dangers of speaking out against the sacrament under the Six Articles in his dialogue on the Mass of 1548.⁸ Gilby in his 1548 tract on the Mass wrote: 'If I be blamed, if I be imprisoned, yea if I be burned for Christ's cause and the truth, yet I am happy...'.⁹

If we consider the broader context of the English debate on the Eucharist at this time, Ascham's *Apologia* counts among some of the most advanced reformist works. Prior to the lifting of the Heresy Laws and the Six Articles, the only known Protestant authors to have published on the subject of the Eucharist in English were Bale, Hooper, and certain writers on the continent.¹⁰ The rest of the tracts were either left anonymous, an eloquent

⁷ The Heresy laws and Six Articles were repealed in the November-December 1547 Parliament, a couple of weeks after which Ascham would send a letter to Cecil about the *Apologia* he had composed ((L) G:I.83/H:82, 1548).

⁸ William Turner, *A newe dialogue vvhetherin is conteyned the examinatio[n] of the messe and of that kind of priesthode, whiche is ordeyned to saye messe* (London, 1548) (STC 24362), sig.A7^v. Turner is a fascinating reformer. He was a student and fellow of Pembroke, Cambridge, and he later specialised in botany. Before being appointed as Somerset's chaplain and physician at the start of Edward VI's reign, he had spent much of Henry's reign on the continent, mixing in Protestant circles. Under Edward, he importantly helped persuade Cranmer to seek the assistance of continental Protestants. He would go into exile during Mary's reign (ODNB).

⁹ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.Ff4^v.

¹⁰ John Bale, *The first examinacyon of Anne Askewe lately martyred in Smythfelde and the lattre examinacyon of Anne Askewe* (Wesel 1546 and 1547) - references to the text are to the Parker Society edition: *Select Works of John Bale*, ed. Rev. H. Christmas (P.S., Cambridge, 1849); John Hooper, *An answer unto my lord of wynchesters booke ...wherewith he robbith the unlearned people of the trew belief in the moost blessyd*

testimony perhaps of the potential risks involved in going public on this topic, or were reprints of earlier works critical of the Mass by reformers who had already died for their convictions, such as Frith, Lambert and Tyndale.¹¹ Composed at the end of 1547, Ascham's work was at the vanguard of a new Protestant surge of unequivocally reformist texts on the Eucharist that exploded into print during the year of 1548. According to Pettegree, this explosion of reformist texts can be divided into three categories: reprints of Reformation 'classics'; translations of the continental reformers; and writings of the emerging leaders which mainly focused on the Catholic Mass.¹² Ascham's appears to have fallen most naturally into the last group of so-called 'emerging leaders'.

Like a number of these tracts, Ascham's *Apologia* was confrontational and divisive in its approach. That he was motivated by reforming zeal of an antagonistic kind is reflected in his clear engagement with the polemical discourse of name-calling. A good example of this was Ascham's repeated attribution of the term 'Catholic' to his opponents, to those who supported the Mass and the sacrifice: 'And how do men now misuse this name (of) "Catholic"? They have led it into that place in which the name of "sophist" was placed by the Greeks....On this account, this name "Catholic" now resounds nothing other than to be defector from the Gospel of Christ to the power of the Pope', '... it is precisely those men who wish to be spoken of as Catholics and sacrificers...'; and, 'And if our Catholics hold what the Scriptures teach and what the Doctors think in any account, they shouldn't appropriate for themselves alone the true sacrifice in the Mass'.¹³ One has to exercise some caution in drawing overly teleological conclusions from the use of terms such as 'Catholic', but Ascham's contentions do appear to carry something of the imperative to mark difference that

sacrament of the aulter (Zurich, 1547) (STC 13741); Antoine de Marcourt, *A declaration of the masse* (Wittenberg, 1547) (STC 17314). Davies in her bibliography in *Religion of the Word* dates Gilby's *Answer* to 1547.

¹¹ Anon, *An Epistle exhortatorye, admonishing and warning all faithful Christians to beware of the false fained God of the aulter, and only to trust in the onely lyving God* (London, probably 1547); Anon, *An Answer to a papistical exhortation* (Antwerp, 1547); William Tyndale, *The supper of the Lorde ...whervnto is added an epistle to the reader, and incidently in the exposition of the supper is co[n]futed the letter of master More against Iohn Fryth* (London, 1547, originally of 1533) (STC 24471); John Frith, *A boke made by Iohn Fryth prysoner in the Tower of London answeyng vnto M. Mores letter, which he wrote agaynst the fyrste lytle treatyse that Iohn Fryth made concernynge the sacramente of the body and bloode of Christ* (Antwerp, 1546, originally 1533) (STC 11382); John Lambert, *A treatyse ...concerynge hys opynyon in the sacrame[n]t of the aultr as they call it, or supper of the lorde as the scripture nameth it* (Wesel, 1547, originally 1538); in the reprint, Bale wrote the preface.

¹² A. Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation: the English exception' in Marshall and Ryrie, *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, p.172.

¹³ *Apologia*, pp.122, 141 and 142. This should be set against a single positive and inclusive reference to the 'Catholic Church' at p.24.

Marshall identifies as a feature of confessionalisation in his recent discussion of the use of religious labels in the Reformation.¹⁴ Marshall dates this tendency to the middle of Elizabeth's reign, but, just as regards Ascham's use of the term 'Protestant' (see chapter 1), he may well have anticipated a later development here. Another label Ascham mentioned in his tract was 'new men'. He identified it as a term of insult being bandied around by his religious opponents who were, according to Ascham, using it to suggest that 'new men' placed no faith in the Fathers of the Church.¹⁵ Ascham would respond forcefully with a full demonstration of his subscription to the Fathers (as discussed below) but, as interestingly, he also promptly re-channelled the label into his Eucharistic argumentation; he claimed that it was only 'new men' who correctly performed the sacrifices in the sacrament such as self-purgation (thereby making them 'new men').¹⁶ In his Eucharistic intervention, Ascham was consciously and willingly participating in the semantic volleys that played such an important role in the consolidation of religious division.¹⁷

There was in Ascham's work no trace of prevarication, ambiguity or eirenicism, and certainly no attempt to reinvigorate the Mass in the name of renewal. His approach was predicated entirely on schism. This may in part be evidenced by the longer title of Ascham's *Apologia* which was framed starkly as the defence of the Lord's Supper *against* the Mass. The presentation of his Eucharistic contribution as a bald antithesis between the Mass and the Lord's Supper, asking whether 'the Mass was the same thing as the Lord's Supper', was much more assertively done than the government's approach to the matter: even in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, the term 'Mass' was still retained in conjunction with the Eucharist in a section entitled: 'The Supper of the Lorde and the Holy Communion commonly called the Masse'.¹⁸ Rather, Ascham's wording was very similar to that used by Turner, fellow Cantabrigian and a man described in history as 'one of the most influential polemicists of the Reformed party'.¹⁹ In his examination of the Mass of 1548, he argued, just as Ascham had

¹⁴ Marshall, 'The Naming of Protestant England'.

¹⁵ *Apologia*, p.141. *novus homo* ('new man') was of course also used as a form of abuse in the ancient world, one applied, in particular, to Cicero. It was later used by, *inter alia*, Gardiner of his religious adversaries.

¹⁶ *Apologia*, p.141.

¹⁷ 'Sacramentarian' was another term he used and one I discuss in sub-section 3.2.

¹⁸ Ascham, *Apologia*, p.14. The Order of the Communion of March 1548 did not use the word 'Mass' though this was probably because it only dealt with the part of the Mass that constituted the communion and was meant to be inserted into the Latin Mass. It was not until the 1552 Prayer book that the word was officially omitted from the communion service.

¹⁹ Ryrie, 'The Strange Death of Lutheran England', p.76

done, that the ‘Mass is not the Supper of the Lord’, adding that ‘the masse and the supper of the Lord differ more one from another than a naked man and a clothed one’.²⁰

Nor did the fact that the bulk of Ascham’s *Apologia* was devoted to an attack on the Mass rather than a more positive asseveration of the Lord’s Supper detract from its theological intent. As a number of historians of the Reformation have observed, it was common for reformist literature of this period to focus on deficiencies and abuses rather than alternative definitions and models. Seven eighths of the whole of Cranmer’s *Defence* of 1550 was devoted to refuting errors about the Mass.²¹ In any case, Ascham’s attack on the Mass was a far-reaching and robust one. He set out its abuses one by one. These ranged from wrongful worship, to misleading the people and contradicting the word of God and Christ’s testament. Grant, the man responsible for finally publishing the tract, in the dedication of the work, attested to his no-stone-unturned approach: ‘...Roger Ascham follows through copiously enough the follies, pretences, frauds, shadows and absurdities of this Mass, and would have gone through at greater length if he had completed this little discussion’.²²

In its timing and approach, the *Apologia* can be compared to the writing of two aggressively Protestant reformers from the continent (both French) whose works were imported to England. Antoine de Marcourt, close ally of Guillaume Farel (a founder of the Reformed Church) and hard-line critic of the Roman Church and the Mass, had his *Declaration of the Mass* translated into English and published in 1547.²³ In this tract, he deconstructed the Mass through a series of seven declarations which culminated at the end in an itemized list of the abuses of the Mass. Jean Veron, a reformer who had moved to Cambridge in 1536 and was one of the main disseminators of continental works by Zwingli and Bullinger in England, devoted a tract, published in England in 1548, to enumerating the ‘blasphemies of the Mass’ which, in his tract, totalled five.²⁴ The fact he also felt compelled in his tract to answer a

²⁰ Turner, *Newe Dialogue*, sig.C5^r.

²¹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.464. Cranmer’s *A defence of the true and catholike doctrine of the sacrament of the body and bloud of our sauour Christ with a confutacion of sundry errors concernyng the same, grounded and stablished vpon Goddes holy woorde, [and] approued by ye consent of the moste auncient doctors of the Churche* (London, 1550). References to sections in the text are taken from *Remains of Thomas Cranmer*...collected and arranged by Rev. Henry Jenkyns (Oxford, 1833), vol.2.

²² See appendix 2.

²³ *A declaration of the masse*. For Marcourt’s association with Farel and opposition to the Mass, see J. Zuidema, *Early French Reform: the theology and spirituality of Guillaume Farel* (Farnham, 2011), p.12.

²⁴ *The. V. abhominable blasphemies co[n]teined in the Masse* (London, 1548) (STC 24679).

charge of treason by his detractors is further indication of the boldness involved in such a sweeping attack on the Mass at this time.²⁵

One of the most forceful aspects of Ascham's attack on the Mass was his treatment of the Mass as an entity in itself. He frequently used the term *religio* (in the sense of a 'form of religion' or 'ceremony') to describe the Mass in a way that underscored the idea of the Mass's status as one religious rite among many. Even more strikingly, he diagrammatically set out the whole canon of the Mass and its constituent parts with an elaborate series of headings and sub-headings which extended over four pages.²⁶ This he did with the explicit aim of highlighting its total disjuncture with Scripture and its nature as a bogus religious construct. Setting it out in the systematic detail he did, he also managed to desacralize the Mass, treating it as specimen that could be dissected, probed and ultimately rejected. He was not in fact alone in such an approach and a number of continental reformers would adopt a similar technique of detailing the fabric of the Mass only to marginalise and demolish it. These included: a Lutheran text, *The Disclosing of the Canon of the Popish Mass* in which the Mass canon was set out and, line by line, dismissed out of hand; and Marcourt's *Declaration of the Masse* which, *inter alia*, contained a detailed break-down of the different facets of the Mass and an 'Epilogue to the Reader' by one Cephias Geranius which also set forth the elements of the Mass in accordance with a carefully constructed colour scheme.²⁷ It is illuminating to consider this overlap in approach between Ascham, Luther, Marcourt and this Cephias Geranius, the latter actually being a pseudonym for Jean Viret, the most celebrated Reformed preacher in France whose Academy in Lausanne would help to found Calvin's Academy in Geneva.²⁸

²⁵ The long title of the tract included 'a short a[n]swere to them that saie we ronne before the kyng and his counsaile'. See also C. E. Euler 'Bringing Reformed Theology to England's "rude and symple people": Jean Veron, minister and author outside the stranger church community' in R. Vigne and C. Littleton, (eds.), *From Strangers to Citizens*, (Brighton and Oregon, 2001), pp.17-24.

²⁶ *Apologia*, pp.39-42. It was an extraordinarily elaborate taxonomy; he described the Mass as being divided into four sorts, then proceeded to list timings, types, locations, recipients and the technical names of the ritual's component parts. Moore has some very interesting observations about Thomas Paynell's tabulation of religious material which effectively framed and managed the act of reading in what she terms a 'censor and control experience': 'The "Profitable" Translations of Thomas Paynell', p.44.

²⁷ Anon, *The Dysclosing of the Canon of ye popysh masse with a sermon annexed unto it of ye Famous clerke...Dr Marten Luther* (London, 1548) (STC 17627); Marcourt, *A declaration of the masse*: see, in particular, declaration number 4, which defined the Mass.

²⁸ D.K. McKim, *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith* (Westminster, 1992), p.386.

A trait generally shared by hard-headed theological reformers was aggressiveness of tone.²⁹ Ascham's tone was likewise unashamedly derisory. At the end of a long introduction, Ascham ostentatiously parodied the *Agnus Dei* of the Mass. A formulation of words held so hallowed for so long was openly belittled: 'Behold, the Mass of the Pope which removes the Lord's Supper! Behold, the foxes of the Pope which devour the lamb of God! Behold, the idol of the Pope which adds to the sins of the world'.³⁰ He was, furthermore, utterly scathing about the monopoly of the Mass and trenchantly undermined what was probably the most important ritual of popular devotional life, asking sarcastically: 'But on what one matter do we spend each day without being sated and very long ages without nausea and establish the stronghold of our religion? Is it not in hearing the Mass? Is it not in seeing the Mass? Is it not the Mass alone which brings it about that everything else becomes "sent"?'³¹ He even charged the Mass with being the 'harlot' of the Lord's Supper.³² This form of denigration was not dissimilar to a series of scurrilous allegorical attacks on the Mass personified as a harlot, Mistress *Missa*, by none other than Luke Shepherd, a notorious populist satirist who had been imprisoned by Henry VIII on account of some of his pamphlets and had been responsible for an excoriating attack on the real presence in a poem entitled 'Jon Bon and Master Parson'.³³

Such truculence on Ascham's part marked him out as radical. It was certainly not in tune with the official *Proclamation against the vnreuer[n]t disputers and talkers of the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ* of which a central preoccupation was precisely this issue of irreverence and contention.³⁴ Indeed, a further index of governmental anxiety about tone and treatment of the Eucharist was the publication, *cum privilegio*, in 1547 of Erasmus's (somewhat fudged) exposition of the Eucharist which contained in its short preface 'To the Devout and Good Christian Reader' an express reference to Erasmus's

²⁹ Erasmus wrote in a letter to Zwingli to the effect that he taught Luther everything, but less offensively: B. Hall, 'Cranmer's Relations with Erasmianism and Lutheranism' in P. Ayris and D. Selwyn (eds.), *Thomas Cranmer: Churchman and Scholar* (Woodbridge, 1993), p.15.

³⁰ *Apologia*, p.43.

³¹ *Apologia*, p.60.

³² *Apologia*, p.42.

³³ Shepherd, *The Upcheringe of the Messe* (London, 1548); *Pathose, or an inward passion of the pope for the losse of hys daughter the Masse* (London, 1548); and *Jon Bon and Mast Person* (London, 1548). Ryrie and Marshall point out that Luke Shepherd may in fact have been a pseudonym of the radical evangelical printer, John Day (King, 'John Day – Master Printer', p.191).

³⁴ Ryan considers that in parodying the *Agnus Dei* (referred to above) as he did, Ascham would have been guilty of the irreverence cautioned against in this Proclamation (*Ascham*, p.96).

reverent handling of the Mass.³⁵ The tract also urged deference to the judgement of the Church, Erasmus warning that the subtleties of doctrine were best left to those fit to deal with them.³⁶ Ascham, in his theological militancy, appeared to pay no attention whatsoever to this official requirement for a milder or more detached approach.

3.2 Doctrine

Ascham's *Apologia* did not simply attack the Mass as a whole, but targeted specific aspects of the Mass. It was theologically comprehensive in its scope, engaging at length firstly with adoration, elevation and (more briefly) the failure in administering communion of both kinds, and later, the sacrifice and the priesthood. It is also possible to infer an advanced position regarding the presence. His arguments against each element of the Mass were every bit as progressive as concurrently developing government positions and, in several cases, anticipated official promulgations of Reformed policy. Whilst it is, of course, important to appreciate the difference between private and public doctrinal views when it comes to drawing such comparisons - Ascham's *Apologia* was a tract in Latin which remained in manuscript form -, it is worth recalling that Ascham did not view his *Apologia* as an entirely private affair, hoping eventually to forward it to the Duke of Somerset.

In his *Apologia*, one of the first doctrines Ascham dealt with was the adoration and elevation of the Mass. These he refuted over the course of ten pages.³⁷ His case was simple but firm. The act of elevating the host in the Mass ceremony and its subsequent veneration amounted to false worship which was required neither by God's Word, the early Church, the Apostles, nor the Nicean Synod. True worship of God, he argued, could not occur on the basis of what was actually visible or seen but only through the spirit and faith. He depicted these elements of the Mass as not only misguided but also ridiculous and was clear that their sole basis was ignorance, error and idolatry. In his total opposition to the elevation and adoration Ascham surely had much in common with other members of the ruling party.³⁸ However, at the time Ascham wrote his *Apologia*, these issues of the elevation and adoration had not been publicly

³⁵ *An epistle of the famous clerke Erasmus of Roterodame, concernynge the veryte of the sacrament of Christes body and bloude whyche epistle is set before the excellent boke, intytuled D. Algeri De veritate corporis et sanguinis dominici in Eucharistia* (London, 1547, originally 1530) (STC 10490).

³⁶ McConica, *Humanists*, p.176.

³⁷ *Apologia*, p.10 and pp.43-53.

³⁸ For example, in respect of Cranmer, a private notebook (*De re sacramentaria*) found in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, contains many of the positions and views, such as the act of worship in the sacrament, that he espoused in his later *Defence*: P.N. Brooks, *Cranmer's Doctrine of the Eucharist* (MacMillan, 1992), p.41; and MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.468.

broached at all. In fact, there appeared to be considerable levels of reticence surrounding them. Ascham's vehement and confident rejections of adoration and elevation are certainly eye-catching when one recalls that the lifting of the host remained the climax of the Mass service outlined in the 1548 Order of the Communion.³⁹ The act of elevation was only finally rejected outright in print in 1550 in Cranmer's *Defence*.⁴⁰ The issue of the adoration was also still being debated in the House of Lords in December 1548 and it was not until 1550, when Cranmer officially publicised his Eucharistic views in his *Defence*, that it was officially denounced.⁴¹

The government were rather more forthcoming in their early and open support for a communion of both kinds. The Act for the Communion of Both Kinds was passed in December 1547.⁴² Ascham's open support for the principle in the *Apologia* was running very much in parallel with the regime. He was firm about the need to offer both the consecrated bread and the wine to the congregation and acerbically criticised the exclusion of the congregation from the cup. In one place his argument for the necessity of both kinds was based on the authority of Cyprian.⁴³ He began by alluding to Cyprian's criticism of the omission in his own time to mix wine with water in the sanctified cup.⁴⁴ He then used Cyprian to bemoan the failure in modern times to administer the cup at all, writing 'If Cyprian were alive now and was to observe that there is no communion in our Mass and was to see the untasted cup taken away from the people, ... what would he say?'⁴⁵ In casting Cyprian as a witness in this way Ascham was not simply clarifying a point of doctrine, as the government had done in their Act, but deliberately drawing attention to the shock value of the previous denial to the people of the blood of Christ.⁴⁶

³⁹ *The Order of the Communion*, 1548, ed., H.A. Wilson (Henry Bradshaw Society, 1908). There was some additional rubric provided in the Order of Communion that stipulated there should be no elevation for a second consecration: MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.386. Rubric was used in a similar way in the Book of Common Prayer 1549, as per B. Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer: the texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662* (Oxford, 2011), p.702.

⁴⁰ Cranmer's *Defence*, p.442.

⁴¹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.397-8 and 406. Cranmer, *Defence*, p.444.

⁴² I Edward VI c.1 reinforced by the Order of the Communion, 1548.

⁴³ *Apologia*, pp.73-74.

⁴⁴ *Apologia*, p.73. Cyprian had argued that Christ's words in Scripture 'I am the true vine' meant that it was impossible that water without any wine could represent the blood of Christ: see Cyprian's Epistle 63 in *Ancient Christian Writers, The Letters of St Cyprian*, vol.3, eds., J. Quasten, W. J. Burghardt and T. C. Lawler (USA, 1986).

⁴⁵ *Apologia*, p.74.

⁴⁶ The Order of the Communion baldly stated that it be 'enacted that the most blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ should from henceforth be commonly delivered and ministered unto all persons within our Realm'.

Ascham was even more robust when it came to what he perceived to be the most heinous abuse of the Mass - the sacrifice (or oblation) - and he devoted a significant proportion of his tract to its repudiation. He denied that there could be any sacrifice in the Mass beyond that of Christ's on the cross. He used the tag *sacrifici* ('sacrificers') pejoratively and bitterly throughout the *Apologia*. There were a number of points he was most emphatic about. These included: the lack of efficacy of a sacrifice beyond Christ's, particularly when it came to propitiatory sacrifices to the dead; the objectionable nature of private sacrifices undertaken by priests; and the lack of Scriptural foundation for the sacrifice. He was also clear about what he considered to be the true position as regards the sacrifice, namely that the sacrifice of Christ was unique and final and the Eucharist was simply a memorial to and a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. He was likewise insistent about the fact that there existed another form of sacrifice that belonged to all Christians, defining these sorts of sacrifice as prayer and thanksgiving.

Since Luther's rejection of the Mass sacrifice some years earlier, the issue of the sacrifice had been an important one in evangelical theology.⁴⁷ Yet in England, at the start of Edward's reign, the issue was still a highly contentious one.⁴⁸ Just one year before Edward came to the throne, a curate named Hancock had been suspended for denying that the Mass was a sacrifice.⁴⁹ Although we can be fairly sure that questionnaires issued by Cranmer to a group of conservative bishops during the November-December 1547 Parliamentary session signified the doctrinal shift he himself and others had already made, publicly, at least, the sacrifice was still subject to ongoing debate.⁵⁰ Even when the Book of Common Prayer of 1549 did come to delimit the sacrifice to that of Christ's and the sacrifices of thanksgiving, these messages remained packaged within older forms and frameworks; for example, the Eucharist prayer still followed the canon of the Mass which referred to the (actual) sacrifice of the son.⁵¹ It was not until 1550 that the regime would fully and completely reject the notion of the sacrifice in the sacrament.⁵² In terms of the doctrine of the sacrifice, Ascham

⁴⁷ R.C. Croken, *Luther's First Front: The Eucharist as Sacrifice* (Ottawa, 1990).

⁴⁸ Prior to the Council of Trent in 1546, the sacrifice of the Mass had not been formally defined: Lowe, *Richard Smyth and the language of orthodoxy*, p.177.

⁴⁹ Ryrie, 'Strange Death Lutheran England', p.72.

⁵⁰ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.379.

⁵¹ N-Brooks, *Cranmer's Doctrine Eucharist*, pp.73 and 75; H. Hillerbrand, *Encyclopedia of Protestantism* (New York and London, 2004), pp.448-449; and Cummings, *Book of Common Prayer Texts*, p.xxix.

⁵² Cranmer, *Defence*, preface to reader and book 5 (p.447 and ff) on the oblation and sacrifice of Christ.

was, once again, more than keeping apace with those usually credited with being at the forefront of reform.

Ascham evinced particular theological command and purpose in his scrutiny of another element of the Mass, the Mass priest. His critique was lengthy and entailed a radical re-appraisal of the concept of the priesthood, one totally bound up with his abovementioned belief in the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice. He denied outright that a priest had the power to offer Christ in the Mass and, as he had done with the sacrifice, restored the priesthood to Christ as the only true priest. He also embraced a key tenet of Protestant belief, namely the priesthood of all believers which was spiritual in nature rather than a concrete office.⁵³ He limited the main functions of a priest to those of preaching the Word and ministering. Ascham's suggestions for reforming the priesthood in the Mass were again very much in line with the Edwardine regime. The government would effect a number of major changes which reflected the new thinking on the priest's role in the sacrament; both of the Prayer Books and Cranmer's *Defence* clearly put to bed the idea that the Eucharist was in any way to be perceived as a priestly sacrifice, and made it plain that there was no real difference between layman and priest except in ministration.⁵⁴ Despite this broad consensus in doctrinal terms, Ascham in his treatment of particular aspects of the priesthood took things some way further than the government. A good illustration was Ascham's use of the Eucharistic context as an opportunity for holding the sacred priestly rites of ordination up to challenge. This he did twice.⁵⁵ In this respect, he was racing ahead of the administration. There was much official nervousness in Edward's reign about amending the wording of priestly consecration at all; changes which were originally intended for inclusion in the 1549 Prayer Book had to be delayed and were instead set out one year later in the 1550 Ordinal.⁵⁶ Even so, the 1550 Ordinal retained the tradition of the instruments, the chalice and bread and Bible being presented to the candidate, a gesture which had the capacity to imply a priestly sacramental role.⁵⁷ Furthermore, as I further discuss in chapter 4, when it came to the issue

⁵³ Ascham called it a *spirituale sacerdotium* on pp. 106 and 110 of his *Apologia*. These twin ideas of the universal claim to priesthood and its spiritual nature were key features of Lutheran thought as espoused in a number of his works such as his address *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* and *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* and sermons. As discussed below, the Lutheran orientation of Ascham's *Apologia* is suggestive.

⁵⁴ Cummings, *Book of Common Prayer Texts*, pp.701-2; Cranmer, *Defence*, p.456.

⁵⁵ *Apologia*, pp.100 and 115-116.

⁵⁶ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.94.

⁵⁷ Marshall, *Priesthood*, p.140. This was finally removed in the 1552 version.

of the priesthood, Ascham would also exhibit considerably more anticlericalism than was officially palatable.

In historical accounts of the Reformation one of the major factors in determining a reformer's stance is their position on the issue of Eucharistic presence and it is an obvious question to ask of Ascham's anti-Mass tract. There are no explicit statements in Ascham's *Apologia* regarding the presence, but it is possible infer certain leanings from his arguments. At one point, Ascham appeared to argue against the Lutheran notion of ubiquity: he rejected a claim that Christ's physical body which had the attributes of divinity could be present everywhere in the Eucharist:

But you say again: where the body of Christ is, there is the spirit; where the spirit is, there is divinity and divinity is everywhere and clearly it ought to be worshipped. If you make such connections, then every single thing must be worshipped because the divinity of Christ has been poured into every single thing... Harken to the contrary. Either demonstrate through Scripture that this corollary is true or leave off teaching us that for which you have no authority.⁵⁸

Although Ascham's aim here was clearly a refutation of the adoration, also implicit in his argument was a denial of Christ's presence in the sacrament; later in the tract he would make express reference to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father.⁵⁹

There were other parts of the *Apologia* which appeared to pertain to the presence. One of these seemed to suggest that he believed in a combination of spiritual and corporeal presence (he referred to the congregation being 'joined together in a certain spiritual grace, but also joined together in a natural and bodily sharing').⁶⁰ However, the rest of his other (numerous) statements were much more obviously in line with a view of the Eucharist historians generally term 'Reformed', a view which denied real or corporeal presence, and declared instead Christ's presence to be merely spiritual or in remembrance of the communicant. Ascham claimed, for example, that 'The sacrifice doesn't comprise a visible offering, but a spiritual victim' and stressed that 'When so many follow this remembrance of the passion celebrated by the comprehension of the Lord's body and blood, or rather they occupy sacrifices of course (those) of humility, of justice, of praise, of the act of giving thanks and of

⁵⁸ *Apologia*, p.49.

⁵⁹ *Apologia*, p.91.

⁶⁰ *Apologia*, pp.10-11.

obedience, it is very clear that the Supper...also assumes the name of a sacrifice'.⁶¹ Ascham also argued that:

The remembrance of the completely perfected sacrifice of Christ on the cross is celebrated in the Supper by the whole of the people in common ... the sacrament of the Eucharist is not an offering of Christ but a memorial to his offering, and nor indeed does it comprise a sacrifice but the remembrance of his sacrifice... everyone celebrates the memory of the sacrifice of Christ in the supper in the same way.⁶²

Ascham was likewise unequivocal in his view about the nature of the sacramental bread and wine, that they were just that and had no other properties, and nor could they be considered to be 'accidents' of bread and wine which concealed the real presence of Christ:

Augustine says that what is seen is bread and, because faith needs to be provided for, the bread is the body of Christ. The common people don't direct their faith towards the body of the Lord, which is understood (with the mind), but direct their attention to the bread which is seen. And so, neither body nor divinity are worshipped by the common people but the bread which they see... On this point several people make noises in disagreement because I, with Augustine, call what is seen bread, when those people say, without foundation, that simple accidents are brought to the people's eyes and broken by the hands of the sacrificer.⁶³

Though Ascham did not say so expressly, to deny that what was visible was merely the 'accidents' of bread (and therefore in substance the body of Christ) was one way of denying the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. The fact that Ascham's theological opponents, as he himself explained, were referring to him and his allies as 'sacramentarians' is perhaps a further indication of his and their rejection of any physical or bodily presence in the sacrament.⁶⁴

The official Edwardine Reformation is often characterized by a steady shift in collective Eucharistic outlook from a Lutheran to a more Reformed position. However, when Ascham composed his *Apologia*, a full and open subscription to a more spiritual or memorialist view of the Eucharist was by no means complete or even meaningfully in train. Cranmer himself had only recently been converted to the Reformed way of thinking and, notwithstanding this change of heart, was not yet prepared to make that position public.⁶⁵ The 1549 Prayer Book

⁶¹ *Apologia*, pp.104 and 142.

⁶² *Apologia*, p.140.

⁶³ *Apologia*, p.50.

⁶⁴ *Apologia*, p.119. 'Sacramentarian' was term generally used to denote followers of Bucer or Zwingli, Protestants who firmly eschewed the idea of transubstantiation, Lutheran ideas about presence, and the notion of any physical or corporeal presence at all.

⁶⁵ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.355; N-Brooks, *Cranmer's Doctrine Eucharist*, pp.38-40. Both of these historians date it to roughly 1547.

included language compatible with a belief that Christ was physically, objectively present.⁶⁶ The doctrine of real presence was only unambiguously excluded right at the end of the reign in the 1552 Book of Common Prayer and even then, just prior to its publication, a last minute black rubric had to be added to clarify that the provision for kneeling, an act traditionally used to denote reverence of Christ's presence in the sacrament, did not imply the possibility of real presence.⁶⁷ Alongside this, it is interesting to consider Ascham's *Apologia*. Composed as it was in the first year of Edward's reign, the direction of his Eucharist theology was noticeably advanced relative to the concurrent development and implementation of the Protestant Reformation by the regime.

3.3 Ten Commandments

A distinctive feature of Ascham's *Apologia*, but one that placed him squarely in the Protestant camp, was his use of the Ten Commandments to structure his tract. The Ten Commandments formed the backbone of Ascham's argument against the Mass in accordance with which he examined its various perversions.⁶⁸ Pursuant to the first commandment 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me', Ascham argued that the practice of adoration and elevation in the Mass ran counter to what had been prescribed by God. Under the second commandment 'Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain', Ascham criticised the frequent repetition of the name of God and the Latin liturgical rites of the Mass. Further to the third commandment 'Thou shalt sanctify the Sabbath', Ascham charged the Mass with tyranny in its domination of all religious practice, accusing it of causing the abandonment of true religion and bringing about a widespread 'spiritual sleep'.⁶⁹ His assessment of the Mass under the commandment 'Honour thy parents' concluded that the Mass has invaded the most intimate domestic sphere, renting families asunder. The final commandment that Ascham dealt with in the tract was 'Thou shalt not kill' and his main contention here was the sacrifice which he claimed constituted the daily murder of Christ and ruin of souls by massing priests.

Ascham's use of this organising structure of the Ten Commandments has gone practically uncommented upon, except by Ryan who observed that the whole framework seemed to be a

⁶⁶ A. Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: the Tudor and Stewart realms 1485-1603* (Harlow, 2009), p.157.

⁶⁷ This was as a result of a fierce and vocal campaign by Hooper who was successful in persuading the Council under Northumberland's leadership to overrule Cranmer who was resisting the change: see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.525-30; and Wagner and Schmid (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Tudor England*, p.122.

⁶⁸ I discuss in sub-section 3.6 Ascham's numbering of the Ten Commandments. I also discuss possible overlaps with Luther in respect of their utilisation of the Decalogue.

⁶⁹ *Apologia*, p.62

‘rather absurd’ one.⁷⁰ This is too limited an assessment. In actual fact, Ascham’s utilisation of the Ten Commandments to oppose the Catholic Mass was a crucial index of his reforming purpose. The Ten Commandments were a key plank in the evangelical and Protestant religious reform movements of the sixteenth century (and indeed in Lutheran thought, as I discuss below).⁷¹ This is not to suggest that the Decalogue had been deemed unimportant prior to the Reformation or that Catholics valued it less than Protestants (scholars have maintained quite the contrary⁷²), but the latter were simply more efficient in capitalising on the perceived ignorance about the Decalogue in their propaganda and harnessing it to their own cause. This occurred in a number of ways. In the first place, one moral system was opposed to another: Scripturally-based Ten Commandments were pitted against the unscriptural Catholic code of the seven deadly sins.⁷³ Secondly, the Ten Commandments were established as the new ‘law’, the ‘perfect rule of righteousness’, as Calvin referred to them.⁷⁴ This sense of the Decalogue’s legislative function was given especial prominence in the English Reformation owing in the main to its incorporation by King Henry into his claim to the royal supremacy over the Roman Church, the Ten Commandments constituting the basis for national obedience to that claim.⁷⁵ In the third place, and perhaps most importantly, the Decalogue was invested with a theological significance which in turn served to buttress Protestant doctrines. Calvin, for example, opened the first edition of his *Institutes* with a full exposition of the Ten Commandments and offered comprehensive explications of the Ten

⁷⁰ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.96.

⁷¹ Davies has written that the Ten Commandments were to some Protestants more perfect than the classical description of the ideal state: *Religion and Word*, p.164. Tadmor comments that they were the staple of Protestant teaching from the outset and were referred to in catechisms as ‘moral law’: *The Social Universe of the English Bible: scripture, society and culture in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2010), p.36.

⁷² K. Bockmuehl observes that the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were dominated by the Decalogue, its resurgence having been triggered by Aquinas in the thirteenth: *Christian Way of Living: an Ethics of the Ten Commandments* (Vancouver, 1994) p.15. Also see W.P. Brown, *The Ten Commandments: the reciprocity of faithfulness* (Louisville Ky and Harrow, 2004) for Aquinas’s focus on the Decalogue. Its popularity in the Medieval Age is also attested to in R.G. Newhauser and S.J. Ridyard (eds.), *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (York, 2012), *passim*. However, I thank Ian Green for drawing my attention to the high rate of paraphrasing of Exodus or Deuteronomy and looseness in pre-Reformation formulations of the Decalogue (as he will discuss in his forthcoming book *Word, Ritual and Image*).

⁷³ Bossy has been the one to most forcefully chart this crucial contemporary shift in the moral system of Western Europe in his ‘Moral Arithmetic: Seven Sins into Ten Commandments’ in E. Leites (ed.), *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.214-234. See also Tadmor, *Social Universe*, p.25.

⁷⁴ As quoted in Bockmuehl, *Christian Way of Living*, p.17.

⁷⁵ R. Rex ‘Crisis of Obedience: God’s Word and Henry’s Reformation’, *H.J.*, vol. 39, 4 (1996), pp.863-894.

Commandments in three separate works.⁷⁶ There was even a continental design to have the Ten Commandments at the start of a communion service.⁷⁷

The Ten Commandments were likewise integral to the Edwardine reform programme. From the start, they stood at the centre of all religious policies promulgated by government: the preface of the 1547 Homilies emphasized their importance; the 1547 Injunctions included an edict to the effect that the Ten Commandments must be read aloud in the absence of any sermon; and Cranmer's 1548 visitation gave especial attention to the ability of priests and congregations to recite the Ten Commandments.⁷⁸ Furthermore, the three Protestant dimensions of the Decalogue outlined above – moral, legal and theological – were also major themes in the reform tracts of this new reign. The construction of the Decalogue as a moral code for life formed the basis of a 1548/9 tract by the radical reformer John Hooper, entitled *A Declaration of the Ten Holy Commandments*. In it he stressed its essential place in Christian life, exhorting his readers to diligently learn and religiously observe the Ten Commandments 'which teach abundantly and sufficiently in few words how to know God, to follow virtue and to come to eternal life'.⁷⁹ The Decalogue's function as law found its best expression in an anonymous tract of 1547 published by the evangelical John Day which claimed to be 'a Heavenly Act' and presented the Ten Commandments in the genre of an act of Parliament complete with lawyerly jargon.⁸⁰ Theologically too, the Edwardine Reformation interwove the Ten Commandments into a number of key doctrinal campaigns: an obvious example of this being the use made of the second commandment prohibiting graven images in the campaign against idolatry and images.⁸¹

Ascham's *Apologia*, structured as it was around the Decalogue which he cast explicitly as 'the Law', embraced in an obvious way the moral and legal dimensions of the Ten Commandments as stressed by other Protestants.⁸² However, for Ascham, by far the most

⁷⁶ Bockmuehl, *Christian Way of Living*, p.17. Brown, *Ten Commandments*, chapter 7: this book explains at length the importance of the Decalogue to Reformed theology.

⁷⁷ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.505.

⁷⁸ *Certaine sermons, or homilies*, sig. A2^r; Injunctions, sig.a3^v; Strype, *Cranmer*, vol.1, p.262.

⁷⁹ Hooper, *A declaration of the ten holy commaundementes of allmygthye God* (Zurich, 1548/9) (STC 13746), preface. For his emphasis on the Decalogue, see also C.J. Litzenger, *English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire, 1540-1580* (Cambridge, 1997), p.73.

⁸⁰ Anon, *An Heauenly acte concernynge howe man shall lyue, made by oure soueraygne lord God the father, God the sonne, and God the holy gost, and all the whole clergie in heauen consenting to the same* (London, 1547) (STC 95). Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, p.205.

⁸¹ Aston, *King's Bedpost*, *passim*.

⁸² His whole tract was highly litigious in its approach (see chapter 4).

important role of the Decalogue was as a theological tool, an ultimate yardstick by which the doctrine of the sacrament could be assessed and the doctrines of the elevation, adoration, and especially the Mass sacrifice and the priesthood could be refuted. Through his stark opposition of the Decalogue and the Mass, Ascham was, in effect, overturning fundamental notions about salvation. He was arguing that the most long-cherished vehicle to salvation, the Mass, and its traditional mediators, the priests, were in contravention of the divine commandments of God. In his deployment of the Ten Commandments, Ascham was not only advertising his commitment to the cause of reform, but fully incorporating them into a theological framework in which their role was to overhaul the most basic understanding of the sacrament.

3.4 Private Masses and Mass

A very interesting aspect of Ascham's treatment of the Mass, one that reflects the extent of his engagement in the development of Eucharistic thought, was his conflation of private masses and the Mass as a whole. In the earlier reform tradition, attacks on the Eucharist Mass and private masses had tended to be made separately. A meshing of the two effectively doubled the impact of the case against them and crystallised a new approach to Mass reform.

Private masses, the celebration of a mass without a congregation often in order to benefit the dead, had, since early in the Reformation, been a bone of contention among certain evangelical quarters.⁸³ Opposition to them generally centred on the twin issues of the private sacrifice and the private priesthood, and absence of communion those entailed. Luther had written a whole tract against the private mass in his 1521/2 *De Abroganda Missa Privata* ('On the necessary removal of the Private Mass'), a piece which focused precisely on these issues of the sacrifice and the priesthood.⁸⁴ Melancthon had taken up the campaign against them during the 1530s.⁸⁵ A request for the abolition of private masses had been made by a

⁸³ M. Szablewski reviews the development of private masses from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries in 'Mass without a Congregation: A Sign of Unity or Division' (Wydawnictwo, PhD thesis, 2004). Ryrie, *Gospel Henry VIII*, p.33.

⁸⁴ *De Abroganda Missa privata Martini Lutheri sententia* (Basel, 1522).

⁸⁵ Melancthon's *Augsburg Confession*, 1530. There was also a section dealing with private masses in a work of his published in England in 1548, *A newe work concernyng both partes of the Sacrament to be receyued of the lay people as wel vnder the kinde of wyne as vnder the kynd of breade, with [sic] certen other articles, concernyng the masse and the auctorite of bysshops, ...newly translated out of Latyn* (London, 1548) (STC 17795).

German delegation to Henry VIII in 1538.⁸⁶ And in the following year in 1539 Henry's Parliament discussed whether private masses ought to be observed *de iure divino*.⁸⁷ The outspoken Edward Crome had made a point of publicly preaching against them in 1540, but was swiftly compelled to recant his views.⁸⁸ The evangelical reformer Turner had caused consternation with his highly vocal opposition to private masses and in 1543 he was reported to the King.⁸⁹ However, private masses were upheld under Henry right up until the end of his reign, the necessity of private masses being affirmed by the Act of the Six Articles.

Stirrings for the abolition of the private mass resumed in the new reign and swipes were made against them in the writings of, for example, Hooper and Bale.⁹⁰ A more serious challenge against private masses was mounted in 1547 at King's College, Cambridge, where their legitimacy was actually the subject of disputations and a deliberate stance taken against them.⁹¹ During the course of Edward's new reign the regime determined to ban them, but this by no means happened immediately. In 1548 all chantries, collegiate churches and other foundations which existed for prayers to the dead were abolished, but private masses still had legal force up until their official revocation in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer.⁹²

When composing his *Apologia* Ascham clearly had in mind the private mass. As I explain below, there were considerable similarities between Luther's tract against the private mass and Ascham's *Apologia*. Like Luther, whose *De Abroganda Missa Privata* had focused on the two aspects of the private sacrifice and private priesthood, Ascham would also concentrate these two issues which dominated the second part of his tract. However, unlike Luther, Ascham did not simply confine his argument to the private mass. He instead conflated private masses and the Mass (generally), referring to them interchangeably. For Ascham the private mass was not a discrete theological aberration which might be excised or

⁸⁶ The Lutheran delegation were quite specific that it was private rather than public masses that should be abolished: J. Schofield, *Philip Melancthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 2006), pp.94-96.

⁸⁷ S. E. Lehmborg, *The Later Parliaments of Henry* (Cambridge, 1977), p.65.

⁸⁸ Ryrie, *Gospel Henry VIII*, pp.41-42. Crome was required to admit that private masses constituted an effectual sacrifice on behalf of both the living and the dead. The episode was also recounted in a letter from Richard Hilles (a young London radical who went into exile in Strasbourg in 1540 to avoid arrest) to Henry Bullinger in August 1540 (*Original Letters relative to English Reformation: written during the reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI and Queen Mary*, ed., Hastings Robinson (Cambridge, 1846-7), letter cv, pp.213-215.

⁸⁹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.219 and 304.

⁹⁰ Hooper's *Answer* which argues primarily that there was no private mass in the early Church and that Scripture makes no mention of it: sig.L2^v, N^v, O^v, T3^r and ^v. Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, pp.152 and 171.

⁹¹ See chapter 2.

⁹² Private masses were abolished by the rubric of 1549 which required that if there were 'none to communicate' the priest should, after the offertory, use one or two collects and dismiss the people with the blessing. The position was reinforced in Cranmer's *Defence*. See also Cummings, *Book Common Prayer*, p.xxviii.

corrected, but representative of the Mass ceremony itself. On the tails of one of his references to ‘the private papistical Mass’, he examined the legitimacy of the name ‘Mass’ itself.⁹³ The countless references to ‘private sacrifice’ and ‘private priesthood’ that ran through his work in fact provided the springboard for doctrinal discussion that went well beyond the oblation and the priesthood. He also broadened the argument out from a simple rejection of private masses into one that concerned the Eucharist as a whole. For example, he directly opposed the private Mass and the correct version of the Eucharist – the Supper: ‘Now there is no consuming of the Lord’s Supper in England since the form of a private, papistical Mass crept into its place’; and ‘Does he [*viz. the priest*] not prefer to celebrate a private sacrifice on a private altar, with the gates shut, than to wait for another in order to share in the universal supper of the Lord on the order of Paul?’⁹⁴ He also compared and contrasted what he considered to be the defining qualities of the Eucharist with one of the central functions of the private mass, writing: “‘Giving thanks”, “eucharistein” is to give thanks for benefits received, not to offer our sacrifices for the living and the dead’.⁹⁵ The impact of combining private and public Mass was all the greater as the notion of ‘private’ now denoted the exclusion of all Christians from the communion of the sacrament generally.

Ascham appears to have been part of a broader effort to synthesise the private mass and the Mass as a whole. It was a development underway in Cambridge at the time Ascham composed his *Apologia*. In 1548 Edmund Guest, the vice-provost of King’s College, wrote against the privy mass, probably pursuant to the debates that had been held the previous year at his college.⁹⁶ He, like Ascham, also conflated the two. Throughout the tract he referred to ‘private massing’, the ‘private mass supper’ or the ‘priest privy mass’ but, at the same time, broached, in comprehensive way, issues of the real presence, nature of the bread and wine and transubstantiation, in addition to the sacrifice and the priesthood. The fact that his tract was published *cum privilegio* suggests that such an approach was one that the new regime liked and considered could be of positive assistance to the Protestant cause. These attempts in the writings of Ascham and Guest to combine the Mass and the private mass were helping to push forward Protestant reform in a significant way. They were also contributing to the exacerbation of a theological schism concerning the Eucharist which was becoming evermore irreversible.

⁹³ *Apologia*, p.35.

⁹⁴ *Apologia*, pp.34-35 and 82.

⁹⁵ *Apologia*, p.78.

⁹⁶ Guest, *A treatise againste the preuee masse*.

3.5 Experienced and Capable Theologian

We are unused to thinking of Ascham as a theologian and so an automatic response to his *Apologia* is to think of it as a one-off, a theological flash-in-the-pan. However, a full review of the tract reveals a considerable depth of theological experience which manifested itself not only in a clear capacity for theological argumentation, but in a sound grasp of theological conflicts past and present.

In addition to his evident abilities in Scriptural exegesis and good acquaintance with patristic texts which I outline later in the chapter, Ascham exhibited a confidence in the use of techniques and methodologies normally associated with those trained in theology. One of these was his use of syllogism. He used syllogism, for example, to underpin his argument about the fallacious nature of adoration and, more specifically, to shore up his point that what is seen should not be worshipped. And he wrote: ‘And whatever is seen is not the spirit, therefore what is seen ought not to be worshipped. But what the priest elevates is seen, therefore, what the priest elevates ought not to be worshiped’.⁹⁷ Another device he deployed, this time, in his argument against the Mass sacrifice, was metonymy. It helped reinforce his argument that sacrifices over and above that of Christ’s were not sacrifices in the real sense of the word:

He is not sacrificed (I say) in a true offering which has already been performed once but in grateful remembrance which is often renewed. Therefore, whenever the ancient Doctors have referred to the sacrifice of Christ in the Supper, they have been accustomed to say this by way of metonymy ...and this way of speaking is prevalent in many other matters too. For instance, when we talk about the festival of the Birth of our Lord - Christ was born today - not that he is really born today, [we say that] his birth is recalled by pious people.⁹⁸

His application of metonymy here located him within an important new theological preference for the analytical tools of rhetoric which were now being increasingly co-opted by theological reformers in their doctrinal arguments.⁹⁹

Ascham’s incorporation of Primasius into his line of reasoning was a further index of his theological sophistication.¹⁰⁰ Primasius was a sixth century North African bishop and expert exegete, known in particular for his commentary on Revelation. His work had really only

⁹⁷ *Apologia*, p.48.

⁹⁸ *Apologia*, p.135.

⁹⁹ R. Rex ‘Humanism’ in A. Pettegree, *The Reformation World* (London, 2000), p.63.

¹⁰⁰ *Apologia*, pp.109 and 131.

come to light a few years prior to the composition of Ascham's *Apologia*, with the first edition being printed in 1535. Ascham relied on the authority of Primasius in support of two theological contentions about the primacy of Scripture, firstly that the ceremonial trappings of the Judaic law would destroy the Gospel of Christ, and secondly that Paul is unwilling for traditions beyond his own to be added to the Gospel. Ascham it seems was one of the first reformers to make serious use of this bishop; as far as searches indicate only Bale in his combative *Image of both Churches* would cite Primasius prior to Ascham.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, relying on this early bishop, Ascham stood as a forerunner in what would be a longer tradition of Protestant controversialists to use Primasius. This would include two Cantabrigians with distinctly puritanical leanings, William Fulke and Edward Dering, both of whom became spokesmen in high-level theological debates with Catholic opponents.¹⁰²

What his treatment of the Mass also reflected was a full engagement on Ascham's part with the core contemporary motifs and themes of the broader Protestant movement. As Loach highlights, a vital element in the progression of Protestantism was the process of connecting the prevailing religious atmosphere with the crystallisation of doctrine.¹⁰³ One theme that most effectively galvanized the movement and gave it its coherence and unity, especially at the start of Edward's reign, was antipopery.¹⁰⁴ In Edward's coronation speech, for example, Cranmer emphasised the need to banish the 'tyranny of the bishops of Rome'. Antipopery became a distinctly Protestant discourse and dominated many of the reform tracts that circulated at this time. Ascham's *Apologia*, which was suffused with antipopery, harnessed to full effect this rallying point in order to buttress his own theological argument against the Mass. For example, early on his tract Ascham aligned the Pope, the Devil and the Mass. The tag *missa papistica* ('the papistical Mass') was a recurring one. His references to the Pope were almost all antithetical in their formulation, for example:

[What is it] to compare that which is the source and only protection in which the Pope defends himself against Christ - the authority of the Church - with the authority of the Word of God? ... these are cases either of man against God or Pope against Christ. If these cases and the defenders of these cases had not existed, the Gospel would not be

¹⁰¹ Bale, *Image of Both Churches* (originally printed in 1545) as set out in *Select Works John Bale*, ed., Christmas, p.346.

¹⁰² As revealed by EEBO searches of Fulke, *D. Heskins, D. Sanders, and M. Rastel, accounted (among their faction) three pillars and archpatriarches of the popish synagogue (viter enemies to the truth of Christes Gospell, and all that sincerely professe the same) ouerthrowne, and detected of their seuerall blasphemous heresies* (London, 1579) (STC 11433); Dering, *A sparing restraint, of many lauishe vntruthes, which M. Doctor Harding do the challenge, in the first article of my Lorde of Sarisburies replie* (London, 1568) (STC 6725).

¹⁰³ Loach, *Edward VI*, pp.47-49.

¹⁰⁴ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, pp.18 and 51.

contending with human doctrine, nor the Pope with Christ nor the Mass with the Lord's Supper in England at this time.¹⁰⁵

Ascham's antipopery was in no way a superficially applied prejudice as though he were merely riding on the wave of fashion or the sense of release now unleashed by the death of Henry. His antipopery was the product of a long-standing hatred of the Pope on Ascham's part; as outlined in chapter 1, more than a decade previously he had spoken out against the Pope in Cambridge in an act of defiance which almost cost him his St John's fellowship. It was also an episode of his life that he would recount much later in his *Scholemaster*, suggesting that his anti-papalism ran deep.¹⁰⁶

Another key theme of the Edwardine Reformation was that of idolatry and its corollary, image-destruction.¹⁰⁷ These Ascham also embedded within the detail of his theological attack on the Mass in a way that added a new layer of religious ideology to his theological argumentation. He depicted adoration and elevation of the host, for instance, as wholly idolatrous. He frequently invoked the language of imagery to disparage this part of the Mass service. Imagining Augustine was observing the elevation and adoration, Ascham asked: 'If Saint Augustine were to scrutinise this image with the light of the Word of God, what would he say? Assuredly what, but that he was painting'; he reinforced the point with the anaphora of the word *imaginem* ('image').¹⁰⁸ He repeatedly accused those who observed the Mass of false worship and twice charged them with making an idol of the Mass, for example: 'If this is not idolatry, that is, to mix a most divine thing with human profanation, then I don't understand what idolatry is'.¹⁰⁹ In a sense, what Ascham's exhaustive critique of the adoration and elevation constituted was nothing less than a form of verbal iconoclasm. The

¹⁰⁵ *Apologia*, p.18.

¹⁰⁶ Ascham, *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.234.

¹⁰⁷ Widespread destruction of church imagery had been initially sanctioned during the Summer 1547 royal visitation with Injunctions which authorised the clergy to 'take away, utterly extinct and destroy all shrines ... pictures, paintings and all other monuments... of idolatry and superstition' and encouraged parishioners to do in their own houses (as quoted in M. Aston, *England's Iconoclasts* (Oxford, 1988), p.256). This was extended in the February of 1548 with orders for the complete removal of all remaining imagery from churches and chapels around the land: Aston, *King's Bedpost*; and Aston's 'Iconoclasm in England, Official and Clandestine' in P. Marshall (ed.) *The Impact of English Reformation 1500-1640* (London, 1997). It was further reinforced with a set piece sermon preached in November at St Paul's Cross which publicly ridiculed image cults (MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p.71; Aston 'Iconoclasm', pp.180-181). It had been a major theme of the Henrician Reformation.

¹⁰⁸ *Apologia*, pp.35-36.

¹⁰⁹ *Apologia*, p.53 and also p.50.

emphasis on the verbal over the visual was a fundamental aspect of Protestant self-definition, and something Ascham was fully signed-up to.¹¹⁰

Ascham was, however, a man apprised of theological debates beyond the mainstream. The first example of this was his identification of an important conservative theological proof for the priestly sacrifice, that of Malachi, a prophet and book of the Old Testament. Having quoted the relevant section of Malachi, namely 1:11, ‘In every place a cleansing offering is performed and offered unto my name for my name is great among people says the Lord of hosts’, he proceeded to assemble in a cogent way several arguments against it.¹¹¹ He cited a number of authors including Tertullian (*against Marcio*), Augustine twice (in his letter to Honoratus and in his sermon *de tempore* 255) and Jerome to prove that ‘cleansing offering’ denoted nothing more than prayers and a pure conscience, two attributes he had earlier used to define any sacrifice over and above that of Christ.¹¹² His theological subtlety really came to the fore in his careful distinction between two different interpretations of Malachi by Jerome. Ascham explained ‘how he [Jerome] interprets the offering of Malachi as the speech of saints in one place and in another place as the very offering of Christ on the cross’.¹¹³

Ascham’s detailed engagement with Malachi was interesting because it reflected his immersion in and appreciation of wider theological disputes that centred on this prophet. One key source of this dispute had been Gardiner’s *Devil’s Sophistry* which used Malachi to support the sacrifice. This had generated an immediate response in the form of *Answers* by Gilby and Hooper, both of whom rejected the use of Malachi for this purpose.¹¹⁴ Malachi also formed part of the international debate, with tracts such as those by Melancthon and Veron also denying its viability as a defence for the sacrifice.¹¹⁵ However, the sheer number of references to Malachi in works by Cambridge men points to the extent to which it had become central to theological disagreement within the University. Malachi had constituted an important part of Fisher’s proof for the sacrifice in his earlier *Defence of the Priesthood*,

¹¹⁰ One of Ascham’s jottings on the Ambrose tract comprised the word *inexcusabilis* (‘inexcusable’) next to a passage where Ambrose was dealing with image-worship: *De Vocatione*, p.10.

¹¹¹ *Apologia*, p.143.

¹¹² *Apologia*, p.143.

¹¹³ *Apologia*, p.145. See appendix 1 for more details.

¹¹⁴ Gardiner, *A detection of the Devils sophistrie wherewith he robbeth the vnlearned people, of the true byleef, in the most blessed sacrament of the aulter* (London 1546) (STC 11591). Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.Cx^r; Hooper, *Answer*, sig.X^r.

¹¹⁵ Melancthon, *A newe work concernyng both partes of the Sacrament* in a section with the heading ‘Against the Mass as a Sacrifice’; Veron, in the second section of his *V. Blasphemies of the Mass*.

for instance. Ascham in his *Apologia*, though clearly aware of Fisher's work (as discussed below), credited the insistence on Malachi to a certain Cambridge contingent who were adherents of the Catholic Pighius.¹¹⁶ A clutch of other Cambridge-educated reformers would also make a point of rejecting Malachi, including Gilby (who also wrote a commentary on Malachi in 1553)¹¹⁷, Guest and Becon.¹¹⁸ It would also form a part of the 1549 Disputations on the Eucharist.¹¹⁹ Ascham in his direct confrontation with the Malachi dispute was arguably an agent in its continued protraction and amplification.

Another crucial figure cited by a number of contemporary conservatives as an early proof of the priesthood was Melchizedech.¹²⁰ Melchizedech had been adduced by writers from Fisher through to Gardiner and Smith.¹²¹ In fact, one of the main focal points of the public recantation of Smith at the start of Edward's reign had been the withdrawal of his claim that Christ was not according to the order of Melchizedech.¹²² Ascham picked up the argument in his *Apologia* and addressed it confidently and authoritatively. Over two pages he rejected the validity of using Melchizedech to prop up the priesthood. He rejected it on Scriptural grounds, in that the priests of the Mass were neither eternal or without sin (as per Hebrews 7¹²³), and reiterated again that this priesthood belonged solely to Christ.¹²⁴ In his outright refutation of the Melchizedech prototype he was at the forefront of a broader Protestant campaign which similarly dismissed this theological proof.¹²⁵

In addition to his clear affinity with long-running theological debates, certain references in the *Apologia* pointed to the fact that Ascham was also conscious of the continental Reformation, its ebbs and flows and leading lights. The first example of this comprised an

¹¹⁶ Rex, *Fisher*, pp.131 and 134. *Apologia*, p.148.

¹¹⁷ Gilby ODNB: part of his commentary on Malachi was lost at the start of the Marian reign when Gilby would flee into exile.

¹¹⁸ Guest, *A treatise againste the preuee masse*, sigs.Fii^v and Fiii^r; Becon, *Jewel of Joye*, sig.Gii^r.

¹¹⁹ Madew would reject it as a proof for the sacrifice, affirming, like Ascham, that the words of Malachi denoted nothing but devout prayer and thanksgiving: Pope, 'Oxford and Cambridge Disputations', p.419.

¹²⁰ Referred to in Hebrews 7.

¹²¹ Rex, *Fisher*, p.132; Gardiner, *Devil's Sophistrie*, sig.Lvi^r; Smith, *A Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass* (London, 1546) (STC 22820a), fols xxvi-viii.

¹²² Lowe, *Richard Smyth and the language of orthodoxy*, p.38. An indication of the importance of this retraction was Edward VI's note of it in his journal: J.G. Nichols, *The Literary Remains of King Edward VI* (London, 1856), p.215.

¹²³ Hebrews 7:16 and 26.

¹²⁴ *Apologia*, pp.75-76.

¹²⁵ Tracts by Guest and Turner, for example, explicitly rejected the validity of Melchizedech to support the sacerdotal priesthood: Guest, *A treatise againste the preuee masse*, sigs.E5^v and E6^r; and Turner, *Newe Dialogue*, sigs.E9^v and F1^r.

entire page worth of references to ‘Cologne’ (*Colonia*) and ‘Cologners’ (*Colonienses*).¹²⁶

Ascham was at this point in his narrative excoriating those who viewed the Pope as the ultimate priest and he held up Cologne up as a leading source of papism. As it happened, Cologne was at the time very much in the minds of leading reformers in England. Men like Cranmer had observed from afar the attempt in 1542 by the Archbishop Elector of Cologne, Hermann Von Wied, to reform his diocese along reformed lines.¹²⁷ In the end, Von Wied’s experiment failed owing to extreme opposition by the conservative theologians of Cologne; nevertheless Cranmer drew inspiration from it, viewing the efforts of Von Wied as a paradigm for reform. Cranmer invited Bucer to England with the express intention of getting him to institute the same type of reformation in England.¹²⁸ One can be fairly certain that Ascham’s references to Cologne in his *Apologia* constituted a (disappointed) acknowledgement of the failed attempt at reform there. Ascham was a man who closely followed the events of the wider Reformation and was here showing his appreciation of brave and bold attempts at reform. His awareness of the Cologne episode may also go some way to explain why he would, a few years later, be on such intimate terms with Bucer when the latter came to England in 1549.

A final nod to the European Reformation came in the form of a fulsome reference towards the end of his *Apologia* to Calvin. Ascham praised Calvin as ‘a man extremely well furnished with every support of natural ability and learning’ and referred to ‘an elegant book of his which has been published’.¹²⁹ Ascham - and with evident sympathy - suggested that this book was, at least in part, devoted to Calvin’s campaign against the ‘raging sect’ of Libertines who, inspired by papism, had been ‘roused and excited by the spirit commit every impiety’ and ‘(had been) issued forth from the sewer and the faeces of papism’.¹³⁰ To be citing Calvin and his personal campaign with such open approbation at a point in the

¹²⁶ *Apologia*, pp.109-110.

¹²⁷ Scott-Amos, ‘Protestant Exiles in England: Martin Bucer’, pp.156-9. Further interest in the Cologne experiment was reflected in the 1547 publication of Day’s translation of Bucer and Melancthon’s proposals for Cologne: B.D. Spinks, ‘German Influence on Edwardian Liturgies’ in Wendebourg (ed.), *Sister Reformations*, p.181.

¹²⁸ Scott-Amos, ‘Protestant Exiles in England: Martin Bucer’, pp.158-9.

¹²⁹ *Apologia*, p.125.

¹³⁰ *Apologia*, p.125. The ‘Libertines’ were not a single unified group with which anyone positively identified, but a term of abuse. In 1545 Calvin had published a work against the Libertines and it may be this that Ascham had this in mind here. However, it is just as plausible that Ascham was referring to Calvin’s polemical works against Nicodemites whom Calvin had targeted in the period of 1541-1546 and which had circulated in England. Relevant to Ascham’s Eucharistic context, Calvin had, for example, criticised the Nicodemites’ continued participation in the Mass despite knowing full well it was idolatry. See H.J. Selderhuis’ *John Calvin, A Pilgrim’s Life*, trans. A. Gootjes (Downers Grove III, 2009), p.143 and (ed.), *The Calvin Handbook*, trans. H.J. Baron (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2009), pp.158-60.

Reformation when some of the leading Protestants were only just taking note of his theological positions, was noteworthy. It stood as an index of Ascham's appreciation both of the European reform movement generally and of a figure destined to be one of its most influential and charismatic leaders.

3.6 Ascham and Lutheranism

It is clear from what has been said above that Ascham had high levels of familiarity with the broader context of Reformation quarrels, schools of thought and the theological issues at stake therein. This reflected not only the depth of his involvement in the theological sphere but also his ability to operate, as theological reformers had before and would after him, within a polemical framework of reaction and response. This tendency was perhaps most obviously evident in the support he evinced for Luther which ran through the whole of the *Apologia*. Ascham's assimilation of Luther was both general and specific in nature; it ranged from basic displays of loyalty and the appropriation of Lutheran aphorisms to a full acceptance of some of his most fundamental theological ideas.¹³¹ Ascham made extensive use of one Lutheran work in particular, his *De Abroganda Missa*. Its utilization was also a fairly sure sign that Ascham was tapping into an older Cambridge conflict between Fisher and Luther in which the *Abroganda* had played a central role. Ascham was here not simply demonstrating his awareness of this earlier dispute, but keeping it alive and building on it in this next phase of the Reformation. What Ascham's Lutheran inclination in his progressive exposition of the Eucharist also pointed to was the endurance of the Lutheran influence (together with its ability to cause division) in Cambridge at the start of Edward's reign. The fact that Ascham could be both radical and Lutheran serves to challenge a fairly entrenched historiographical tendency to refer to Lutheranism as a phase Edwardine Protestantism had now grown out of.

It should be noted from the outset that there was no explicit reference to Luther in Ascham's *Apologia*. This was not necessarily significant since it was not uncommon for views to be reproduced without acknowledgement at this point in the Reformation. In any case, there were in other works by Ascham several indications of a strong and sustained support for Lutheran ideas. In chapter 1 I referred to the distinctly Lutheran texture of his 1545 *Themata Theologica*. I also described Ascham's unambiguous support for the German Reformation

¹³¹ Ryan also makes the point that Ascham undoubtedly had Fisher and his virulent campaign against Luther in mind when he wrote the *Apologia* (Ascham, p.96).

and his admiration both for the Luther's protégé and closest ally, Melancthon, and the Lutheran reformer, Sturm. In his *Report on Germany* of 1553, he described Duke Frederick, the Elector, as a 'defender of Luther' and 'a true follower of Christ and his Gospel'.¹³² In his later *Scholemaster*, he complained about 'the railing against poor Luther'.¹³³

One can certainly observe a partiality towards Luther in Ascham's *Apologia*. Ascham's use of the Latin verb *protestor* ('I testify, or 'protest') was almost certainly a semantic nod to the Lutheran 'protest' of 1529 where the term 'Protestant' was first coined.¹³⁴ It is similarly interesting to note that the figures Ascham picked out for especial criticism in his work were those who had been most opposed to Luther. Pighius, whom Ascham lambasted with highly colourful language, had written at least two works directed against Luther.¹³⁵ Thomas More whom Ascham twice jeered at in his *Apologia* was one of the staunchest adversaries of Luther in England.¹³⁶ Finally, Fisher, who had in the 1520s been responsible for generating a European wide campaign against the heresies of Luther, was also indirectly attacked throughout Ascham's work.¹³⁷

At several points in Ascham's *Apologia* Lutheran phrasing was clearly in evidence. Early in his tract Ascham incorporated a Latin proverb ('a bad egg from a bad crow') into a comparison he drew between the Lord's Supper and the Mass. He wrote: 'Let's compare them with one another to see if it [ie the Mass] does not reveal of itself of what crow it is the egg'.¹³⁸ The proverb was one common among Lutherans. Nikolaus von Amsdorf, a close friend of Luther, had, for example, designed a whole batch of satirical medals dating between 1537 and 1547 which had on their obverse the depiction of the Pope's head next to the head of the Devil around which the Latin proverb *mali[i] corvi malum ovum* was inscribed.¹³⁹

Another favourite maxim of Luther was *omnis homo mendax* ('Every man is a liar'), a phrase

¹³² Ascham, *Report*, G:vol.2, p.40; Ryan attests to his Lutheran sympathies in the work (*Ascham*, p.190).

¹³³ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.204.

¹³⁴ *Apologia*, p.24 and see chapter 1 regarding the label 'Protestant'.

¹³⁵ *Apologia, passim*, Ascham referring, for example, to Pighius' *fulminibus* ('thunderbolts') and, his *ludificantes* ('playing the fool') and his *blaterantes* ('talking foolishly'). Pighius, *De libero hominis arbitrio et divina gratia libri X* (Cologne, 1542), against Luther and Calvin; and *Apologia indicti a Paulo III. Concilii, adversus Lutheranas confederationes* (Cologne, 1537 and Paris, 1538).

¹³⁶ *Apologia*, pp.15 and 66. More had supported Henry VIII against Luther in print in 1521 with his *Opus quo refellit Lutheri calumnias* (London, 1523).

¹³⁷ See the chapter on Fisher and his Catholic campaign against Luther in Rex, *Fisher*.

¹³⁸ *Apologia*, p.15.

¹³⁹ See the following website:

<http://www.historicalartmedals.com/MEDAL%20WEB%20ENTRIES/GERMANY/POPE%20AND%20CARDINAL-BW783.htm> (last accessed Autumn 2013); and F.P. Barnard, *Satirical and Controversial Medals of the Reformation* (Oxford, 1927), p.5.

derived from Psalm 116.¹⁴⁰ It also featured in Ascham's *Apologia*; on page 16, he stated clearly 'every man is given to lying' and using precisely the same Latin words as Luther had - *omnis (enim) homo mendax*.¹⁴¹

More important was the evident extent to which Lutheran theology underpinned Ascham's account. Clearly noticeable was Ascham's internalisation of the Lutheran emphasis on man's inherently sinful condition, a key tenet of his doctrine of justification by faith alone. In fact, the very first words of Ascham's *Apologia* cited Genesis 3:15 (And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel), a Biblical verse of immense symbolic value to Luther. The verse seemed to capture the incapacities of the fallen human race and, as Luther himself had expounded in his lectures on Genesis, encapsulated the fundamentals of his theology of justification by faith alone.¹⁴² Significantly too, Ascham's citation of this part of Genesis in his *Apologia* culminated in a whole passage about man's degeneracy and the justifying power of God:

Adam sinned and God condemned him, saying 'You will die...Man, where do you lie now? To where have you sunk? You have lost your life, you have brought forward death, sin reigns, the Devil rages, justice threatens and God turns himself away. Man, where do you lie now? Where is hope of salvation?'...Pay heed at this point to the way in which I describe the justifying goodness of God...¹⁴³

Elsewhere in his work and with no little frequency, Ascham incorporated the term *iusticia*, 'justification', into his general expressions of hope for reformation. The related Lutheran abnegation of the human will was similarly perceptible throughout Ascham's *Apologia*. He made it clear that he counted 'supererogatory good works' as belonging to the Devil, referred resentfully to the 'raising up of human works against the free justification of faith', and emphasised the impotence of human will.¹⁴⁴ He devoted a considerable portion of his narrative to the provision of Biblical examples which highlighted ineffectual acts of

¹⁴⁰ Rex, *Fisher*, p.95.

¹⁴¹ *Apologia*, p.16. Interestingly, Gilby also used the saying in his English tract (*An Answer*, sig.T1^v, and in English at sig.M3^v).

¹⁴² *Luther's Works: Lectures on Genesis, chapters 1-5*, vol. 1, ed., J. Pelikan (Minneapolis, 1958); K.E. Kvam, 'God's Heart Revealed in Eden: Luther on the Character of God and the Vocation of Humanity' in M.J. Streufert (ed.), *Transformative Lutheran Theologies* (Minneapolis, 2010), pp.57-65. A persuasive case can be made to the effect that Genesis 3:15 was regarded by Luther as the single most important text in the Bible: B. Schramm and K.I. Stjerna, *Luther, the Bible and the Jewish People, A Reader* (Minneapolis, 2012), p.161. The verse was also given primacy in the work of Luther's key right-hand man: it appeared in Melancthon's *Loci Communes* (1555) in a section entitled 'Of the Gospel' as set out in *Melancthon on Christian Doctrine, Loci Communes, 1555*, ed. and trans., C.L. Manschreck (Oxford, 1965).

¹⁴³ *Apologia*, p.8. The themes of man's sin and God's *iusticia* had also been prominent in Ascham's *Themata* (see chapter 1).

¹⁴⁴ *Apologia*, pp.3 and 18.

unauthorised human volition. As he had in several letters of the same year, Ascham also decried the *ethelothrēskeia* ('self-willed religious worship') of his religious opponents.¹⁴⁵ The notion of the will was fundamental to his central argument against the Mass and he clearly viewed the Mass as a product of human will that had not been sanctioned by God or Scripture.¹⁴⁶

However, there was in the *Apologia* a much more specific manifestation of Ascham's adherence to Luther. In terms of approach and arrangement, the *Apologia* bore uncanny similarities to Luther's abovementioned *De Abroganda Missa*. The *Abroganda* had been originally composed in Latin in 1521; it was one of several treatises by Luther on the subject of the Eucharist.¹⁴⁷ The *Abroganda* argued against the private Mass; it maintained that the priesthood and the sacrifice were untenable and the products of papal error. These themes were of course prominent in Ascham's *Apologia*. There were though some more striking similarities. First was the depth of their hostility towards the priesthood. Like Luther, Ascham would continually compare and contrast the papal priesthood with the priesthood of Christ, both men locating the Pope as the epitome of the (false) priesthood. Both too made a point of relying upon Christ's words of institution, which each set out systematically, in order to humble the sacrificing priesthood. The angry rhetoric each used against the priesthood was also similar; both associated priests with thieves, for instance.¹⁴⁸ They were bullying in tone and in their respective works can be found frequent and direct challenges to the priesthood which followed the same pattern, Luther writing '...let them show their priesthood out of the Scriptures, or let them confess that they are nothing but masks of the devil and idols of perdition', and Ascham: 'Therefore, either let those Roman sacrificers admit that the name and Word of the Lord have been set forth in the Mass unprofitably for the people by those men, or let them respond to Christ who teaches that every word not understood has

¹⁴⁵ See chapter 1. It appeared in Greek type-face at p.125 of his *Apologia*.

¹⁴⁶ For example, *Apologia*, p.23.

¹⁴⁷ *De Abroganda Missa privata Martini Lutheri sententia* of 1521/2. This has been partially translated in *The Apostolical Succession a Satanic invention, by Martin Luther* (London, 1842). There only exists a complete English translation of his German version of the tract in *Misuse of the Mass (Luther's Works, vol. 36, ed., H.T. Lehmann (1959))*. References to Luther's text are either to the *Apostolical Succession (Abroganda English)* or, where that runs out, the *Misuse*, and occasionally to the Latin of the *Abroganda*; it will be clearly indicated which is being used. Other Lutheran works on the Mass can be found in vols.36-38 of *Luther's Works*, eds., J. Pelikan and H.T. Lehmann. It is interesting to note that the *Abroganda* appeared shortly after his *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* of October 1520 which formed the core of his theological standpoint in the *Abroganda*.

¹⁴⁸ Pettegree refers to Luther's *Misuse of the Mass* (ie. his *Abroganda*) as 'one of the most excoriating denunciations of the priesthood' in *The Reformation of the Parishes: the ministry and the Reformation in town and country* (Manchester, 1993), p.1. Luther, *Abroganda (English)*, p.25 and *Misuse*, p.139; Ascham, *Apologia*, p.77.

been seized by the Devil'.¹⁴⁹ Even at the level of phraseology there was common ground: they both used the tactic of exposure that began with the Latin formulation *nam quid aliud est quam...*? ('For what is it other than...?'), Luther writing 'for what else is this to make gods at our own will and establish divine things at our option?' and Ascham [re. the Mass] 'For what else is it than to raise human works up...?'¹⁵⁰ Another marked correspondence was the trenchant repudiation by the two men of anything that constituted human doctrine which both closely aligned with the concept of *voluntas humana* ('the human will').¹⁵¹ An index of Luther's strength of feeling in this respect was reflected in the alternative title given to the tract by its 1842 translator, namely the *Apostolical Succession – a Satanic Invention*, on account of Luther's insistence that 'whatever is not from God must be from the Devil'. Throughout his tract Luther constantly associated the Devil with human doctrine; the same association was made in the *Apologia* by Ascham who referred to the Devil 49 times in this context.¹⁵²

A final and telling point of overlap was the use made by both Luther and Ascham of the Ten Commandments in their Mass tracts.¹⁵³ In Luther's case, each commandment of the Decalogue was used to highlight Papal crimes of religion.¹⁵⁴ This culminated in a table which set out both the Decalogue of the Old Testament and what he termed 'the Decalogue of the Pope'. At points the arguments each used under the heading of a particular commandment corresponded almost precisely. For example, under the commandment 'Thou shall not kill', both Luther and Ascham focused on the murderous nature of the clergy: Luther, for example, labelling the Pope as a 'murder bishop' and Ascham referring to the priestly desire for killing in their Mass sacrifice.¹⁵⁵ The utilisation of this framework of the Decalogue as a means to build a step-by-step case against the Mass was a highly distinctive one and not, to my knowledge, repeated in any other reformist texts. That Ascham was directly influenced by Luther in his approach here is a tempting conclusion. The fact that

¹⁴⁹ Luther, *Abroganda* (English), p.17; Ascham, *Apologia*, p.58.

¹⁵⁰ Luther, *Abroganda* (English) p.21 – it reproduces the Latin literally; Ascham, *Apologia*, p.18.

¹⁵¹ I explore Ascham's repudiation of human doctrine at greater length in subsection 3.8.

¹⁵² See Cameron on the increasing importance to Luther of the struggle with the Devil in his view of Christianity: *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason and Religion 1250-1750* (Oxford, 2010), pp.66-73.

¹⁵³ Luther covered all Ten Commandments whereas Ascham only reached 'Thou shall not kill' owing to the fact his tract was unfinished. Luther placed a high premium on the Ten Commandments and considered them vital not only for a deeper comprehension of Scripture and for fulfilment of a Christian life but also as a preliminary to God's grace and the sacraments: P.D. Miller, *The Ten Commandments* (Kentucky, 2009); and p.2; Bossy 'Moral Arithmetic', p.227.

¹⁵⁴ Luther would actually go through the Ten Commandments in reverse order, starting with the tenth first. He devoted some 12 pages to this exposition of the Decalogue (*Abroganda* (Latin), from sig.Kii^r onwards).

¹⁵⁵ Luther, *Misuse*, p.207; Ascham, *Apologia*, p.74.

Ascham chose to follow Luther's numbering of the Ten Commandments makes it more so. Ascham's commandments did not follow the formula used by Tyndale (in his renumbering of the Decalogue in his 1530 translation of the Pentateuch), by Calvinists or later Anglicans, or indeed even the Henrician version renumbered in 1537 along Reformed Continental lines.¹⁵⁶ Instead, he followed the order adopted by Augustine and Luther which absorbed the prohibition against graven images into the first commandment rather than keep it as a distinct second commandment, and he had as his second commandment 'Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain'.¹⁵⁷ It was an odd choice to make by Ascham at this stage in the Reformation and seems to confirm even more strongly Ascham's assimilation of Luther.

In the history of the Reformation Luther's *Abroganda* was an important work and was, at least in the early Reformation, very well-known. The work had caused a stir at national level on first publication.¹⁵⁸ It had also generated a significant reaction in the University of Cambridge. As a direct response to Luther's sacerdotal attacks John Fisher, the founder of Ascham's own college, St John's, had composed his *Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio* ('In Defence of the Sacred Priesthood').¹⁵⁹ In the preface he referred to many pestilential books of Luther but that 'yet of all that I have seen, none is more pestilential, senseless or shameless than the one he entitled *The Abrogation of the Mass*'.¹⁶⁰ Access to the work would have been a straightforward matter: University inventories indicate that the volume of Lutheran books circulating in Cambridge far outstripped those of any other evangelical reformer and the *Abroganda* itself appeared in three Cambridge book inventories (all dating to 1558/9 or before), two of which were those of deceased fellows from St John's.¹⁶¹ In addition to its obvious relevance for a member of the University who took an interest in theology, Ascham may well have been drawn to the work on account of its being written in Latin.¹⁶² He may also have been attracted by its humanist strain: in the Latin version of the *Abroganda*, Luther used Greek, cited Cicero and Homer, describing, for example, the latter as bringing gods and

¹⁵⁶ Ryrie points out that the renumbering was first used in Zurich in 1534 and then in England in the Bishops' Book of 1537 ('Strange Death of Lutheran England', p.82).

¹⁵⁷ Interestingly, the Justas Jonas Catechism of June 1548 which, according to MacCulloch, caused Cranmer so much embarrassment also followed the Lutheran numbering (MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.387-8).

¹⁵⁸ Rex notes that the tract was causing concern to the English authorities in June 1523 (Fisher, p.81).

¹⁵⁹ *Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio contra Lutherum* (Cologne, 1525). In conjunction with the *Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio*, Fisher also wrote the *Defensio Regiae Assertionis* in which he defended the sacrifice of the Mass against Luther; both were published in 1525.

¹⁶⁰ viz, the *De Abroganda Missa. Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio* as set out in *The Defence of the Priesthood*, trans. P.E. Hallett, (London, 1953), p.1.

¹⁶¹ Ryrie, *Gospel and Henry VIII*, pp. 171 and 173-4. E.S. Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories*: the two named fellows were William Gockman (d.1558) and Miles Buckley (d.1559).

¹⁶² It was one of the only Lutheran works written in Latin, another was the *Babylonian Captivity*.

men closer together and invoked the mythical figure of Scylla as a way to insult his theological adversaries.¹⁶³

The Lutheran influence that ran through the *Apologia* and Ascham's noticeably close adherence to the *Abroganda* were probably, in part, echoes of the earlier theological quarrel between Fisher and Luther. It was a quarrel in which Ascham had conspicuously sided with Luther against Fisher. Indeed, parts of his *Apologia* appear to have functioned as precise responses to the case Fisher had originally mounted against Luther. In his *Defence*, Fisher had repeatedly objected to Luther's claim that the Greek term *hiereus* could not denote or legitimise a sacrificing priest. He dismissed the need for an explicit reference, arguing firstly that references to elders and/or bishops could denote priests, and secondly that the absence of the term was on account of a deliberate decision by early Christians to avoid giving offence to priests still working in the Temple under the Old Law.¹⁶⁴ In Ascham, we find a lengthy dismissal (also using Greek) of any Scriptural endorsement for the sacerdotal priest. He investigated the use of the Greek term *hiereus* and all its cognate words, such as *hierourgein*, *hierateuein*, *hierōsunē* etc. in the New Testament, and concluded that these words simply referred to the ministry and the proclamation of the Gospel, not the post of priest.¹⁶⁵ Ascham also included an express objection to the connection between the priesthood and Jewish precedents. Fisher had adduced the Greek term *leitourgia* as conclusive proof of the priestly sacrifice¹⁶⁶; Ascham examined the term to prove the opposite.¹⁶⁷ Finally, Fisher argued Melchizedek was the prototype for the Catholic priesthood; Ascham (as we have seen) refuted this.¹⁶⁸

It is not at all surprising that the contours of the earlier conflict between Luther and Fisher had become so entrenched at the University. Fisher had been a towering figure not only in St John's but in the University as a whole. Historians have noted the continued loyalty shown by Fisher's supporters, a number of whom owed their scholarly preferment to him.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps more surprising, however, was the continued strength of Lutheran ideas there,

¹⁶³ The absence of such references in the English translation of the German version are almost certainly owing to the fact that the German version was intended for the rank and file.

¹⁶⁴ Fisher, *Defence Priesthood*, trans. Hallett, p.17 and Rex, *Fisher*, p.135.

¹⁶⁵ *Apologia*, pp.100-101.

¹⁶⁶ Rex, *Fisher*, p.136.

¹⁶⁷ *Apologia*, pp.92-94.

¹⁶⁸ Fisher, *Defence Priesthood*, pp.65-66; Ascham, *Apologia*, pp.75-76.

¹⁶⁹ Rex, *Fisher*, p.84.

especially as the Lutheran influence, despite its earlier grip, is generally acknowledged by historians to have diminished as the Reformation progressed.¹⁷⁰ It is interesting to note how, for example, the (abovementioned) reference to Genesis 3:15, which had such prominence in Lutheran theology, also appeared in a number of other Eucharistic tracts by Cambridge-educated men. The verse was applied to the actions of Askew's inquisitors in Bale's edition of her trials; Gilby used it in his Eucharistic tract against Gardiner; and Hutchinson in his 1550 sermons on the Lord's Supper.¹⁷¹ At St John's in particular, the Lutheran currents were strong enough for John Redman to adopt an openly anti-Lutheran stance in print in the 1540s. In 1547 the known Lutheran, John Taylor, was appointed Master of the college.¹⁷² Ascham's *Apologia* of 1547 likewise confirmed that the tension Lutheranism aroused in college and University was an abiding and significant one, one that would not simply evaporate with the dawn of a new reign.

The Lutheranism on display in Ascham's tract can help make the case for the continued importance of Luther in the Edwardine Reformation. As a number of studies are now arguing, we should perhaps not be too swift to dismiss the importance of Luther's influence in England after 1547.¹⁷³ Even though the English Reformation began to diverge from specific Lutheran positions on the Eucharist, it has been suggested that by the 1540s Luther was simply too important a figure to ignore, was being treated effectively as an authority and that his works were certainly not discarded but reworked.¹⁷⁴ The *Apologia* is consistent with these conclusions. The work highlights the extent of Luther's influence not just on the rhetoric and arrangement of Ascham's theological argument but also on the very basis of the terms on which it was debated. It demonstrates how Lutheran themes and assumptions could

¹⁷⁰ Trueman wrote 'With the accession of Edward, Luther ceased to be an intellectual force in England' in *Luther's Legacy: salvation and English reformers 1525-1556* (Oxford, 1994), p.56; Davies observes that Lutheran influence was minimal by 1540s in *Religion of the Word*, p.xxi.

¹⁷¹ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, p.156; Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.E3r; Hutchinson, *A Faithful Declaration of Christes Holy Supper comprehended in Three Sermons preached at Eton* (sometime in 1550) (London, 1560) ; John Day was responsible for their publication which was supposed to have been 1553, but was delayed on account of Edward VI's death. These are set out in *Works of Roger Hutchinson* ed., J. Bruce (London, 1842), p.226. Hutchinson and Lever would use it against Joan Bocher in their 1549 interrogation of her Anabaptist ideas (*Works Hutchinson*, ed., Bruce, pp.145-6). It was also given prominence at the start of Hooper's *A declaration of Christe and of his offyce* (Zurich, 1547) as set out in *Early Writings of John Hooper*, ed., S. Carr (P.S., London, 1843), p.15.

¹⁷² Miller, *Portrait of a College*, p.17.

¹⁷³ See Wendebourg, (ed.), *Sister Reformations*, dedicated to exploring the special relationship between the German and English Reformations. There are two essays in particular which focus on this: A. Ryrie's 'The After-life of Lutheran England' and Spinks' 'German Influence on Edwardian Liturgies'.

¹⁷⁴ Ryrie, 'After-life of Lutheran England', pp.215-216; Spinks, 'German Influence on Edwardian Liturgies', p.188.

coalesce, rather than clash, with doctrinal viewpoints of a different kind, and how Lutheran approaches, such as his numbering of the Ten Commandments, could become so firmly embedded that they could be reproduced without any sense of anomaly or incongruity.

3.7 Pighius

Incorporated into the *Apologia* was another theological battle-ground, this time far more explicitly articulated than the Lutheran-Fisher conflict, namely that surrounding the Catholic Albert Pighius. Ascham's *Apologia* was replete with disparaging references to Pighius and his supporters whom he termed 'Pighians'. Ascham's *Apologia* provides valuable evidence for the apparent popularity this figure had in Cambridge. The urgency with which Ascham strove to counter his doctrine was also a reflection of the extent to which the teachings of Pighius had taken root in the University. Pighius was an important Reformation thinker and Ascham's full engagement with his arguments is another index of his own awareness of some of the most pressing theological issues of the day.

Pighius ('Pigghe') was a Roman Catholic theologian. He had studied at the University of Leuven (where he was taught by the future Pope Adrian VI) and at Cologne, thereafter being appointed by the Pope to various positions. His allegiance to the Pope was absolute. Pighius soon became involved in various religious disputes. He had collided with Luther over freedom of the will (see above). He had publicly upbraided Henry VIII concerning his divorce, arguing instead for papal infallibility and the status of papal pronouncements as a principle of faith.¹⁷⁵ He was also part of a Catholic movement to reclaim all rights over Scriptural interpretation, accusing (as others on either side of the Reformation had done before him) Protestant reformers of treating Scripture 'as a nose of wax that easily suffereth itself to be drawn backward and forward and to be moulded and fashioned this way and that way...'.¹⁷⁶ In 1540/1 Pighius was appointed to represent the Pope as part of the Roman Catholic delegations in the colloquies at Worms and Regensburg where he conducted himself with extreme hostility towards the (Lutheran) Protestant representatives such as Bucer and

¹⁷⁵ Pighius's *Hierarchiae ecclesiasticae assertio* (Cologne, 1538).

¹⁷⁶ Pighius's *Hierarchiae*, lib.3, c.3, fol.lxxx; the Latin is: *velut nasus cereus, qui se horsum illorum et in quamcumque volueris partem trahi, retrahi, fingique facile permittit*. This accusation was not a new one; Erasmus had used it to attack theologians in his *Encomium Moriae* of 1511 and it had been picked up again later in 1532 by Tyndale who in turn used it against the papists: H.C. Porter, 'The Nose of Wax: Scripture and the Spirit from Erasmus to Milton' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5, 14 (1964), pp.155-174.

Melanchthon.¹⁷⁷ Just before his death in 1542, he clashed in print with both Bucer about justification and Calvin on the issue of the will and predestination and the Church Fathers.¹⁷⁸

In his *Apologia*, Ascham clearly felt the need to respond to arguments being mounted by followers of Pighius. At one point, Ascham referred to the ‘many in this Academy of Cambridge who hold the doctrine of Pighius for an oracle’.¹⁷⁹ A number of the theological disagreements between Ascham (and his party) and the ‘Pighians’ stemmed directly from earlier international controversies surrounding Pighius. The first one that the *Apologia* took up centred on Scripture and its ownership. Ascham repeatedly accused Pighius of being at odds with Scripture, at one point even placing Paul and Pighius in direct antithesis, and shortly afterwards charging Pighius with blaspheming Christ.¹⁸⁰ The rhetoric Ascham used against Pighius was particularly acerbic, accusing him of ‘seizing Scripture violently by the throat’, ‘ramming home his own opinion’ and ‘making open warfare on Scripture’.¹⁸¹ Ascham further tarred Pighius with promulgating ‘the obfuscations of human doctrine’ against ‘the splendour of His Word’ and ‘fashioning doctrine from his own head’.¹⁸² The religious fault-line that Ascham here engaged with was not a trivial one, but one which concerned the fundamental right of Scriptural interpretation and the determination of the true meaning of God’s Word.

The second basis of the gulf that had opened up between Pighius’s followers and their opponents was papal allegiance. Time and time again, Ascham portrayed the Pighians as ‘papists’ and champions of the Pope’s priesthood. He used a barrage of pointed remarks such as ‘Pighius, the Coryphaeus of Roman religion’, ‘to support Pighius is nothing other than to gaze upon the Pope’, and claimed that adherence to Pighius’s teachings was ‘the hallmark of a papist’.¹⁸³ It appeared that loyalty to the Pope as refracted through subscription to Pighius

¹⁷⁷ See the introduction of *The Bondage and the Liberation of the Will: a defence of the orthodox doctrine of human choice against Pighius by John Calvin*, ed., A.N.S. Lane, trans. G.I. Davies (Carlisle, 1996). See also Cameron, *European Reformation*, p.353.

¹⁷⁸ For his quarrel with Bucer, see B. Lugioyo, *Martin Bucer’s doctrine of justification* (Oxford, 2010), p.163. For that with Calvin, *Bondage and Liberation*, ed. Lane, *passim*.

¹⁷⁹ *Apologia*, p.148. Ascham’s appreciation of the theological developments surrounding Pighius and his adherents was a long-standing one. In 1545, in a letter to Cranmer, Ascham had raised concerns about certain approaches being followed in the University, explaining that ‘Many of these men, insensibly I am sure, attribute a tremendous value to Pighius...following in his footsteps in the controversy over original sin and God’s predestination, preferring to be swept precipitantly into error than to follow the right way with St Augustine...’, (L) G:vol.1, 27, p.68/H:30, 1545.

¹⁸⁰ *Apologia*, pp.143, 126, 145, 146 and 147.

¹⁸¹ *Apologia*, pp.143 and 145.

¹⁸² *Apologia*, p.15 and 145.

¹⁸³ *Apologia*, pp.143, 148 and 147.

was perceived as a real problem in Cambridge at the time of the 1547 Cambridge disputations. Notwithstanding the Protestant impetus of the new reign, the opportunities for resurrecting ties with Rome were perhaps in fact not so remote. Indeed, just a few months before the death of Henry, tentative negotiations had been opened to see whether England might come to some arrangement with the papacy.¹⁸⁴ Even as late as 1549, one of the main briefs of the royal commissioners who visited the University was the extirpation of vestiges of popery; visitors were required ‘to exact the oath of obedience and fidelity to the King and his heirs and for renouncing and wholly denying pretended, usurped, feigned authority of the Bishop of Rome’.¹⁸⁵ Ascham sensed the dangers of a Romist faction within the University and used his *Apologia* to highlight their theological errors of judgement.

The third point of rupture centred on the Fathers. Ascham could not make the point forcefully enough that Pighius’s use of the Fathers to corroborate his arguments was, in Ascham’s view, wholly misplaced. In the *Apologia*, Pighius’s name was constantly presented as being in conflict individual Fathers such as Tertullian and Irenaeus.¹⁸⁶ That the disciples of Pighius in Cambridge were also enlisting in a major way the authority of the Fathers to back their position was surely reflected in Ascham’s swipe: ‘Where are all the Pighians who have the Fathers in their speech but Pighius in their heart?’¹⁸⁷ Judging from the earlier theological feud between Pighius and Calvin in which (as Lane has pointed out) Calvin often referred to the Fathers purely in order to refute Pighius’s co-option of them to his cause, it may be that Ascham was doing the same in the *Apologia*.¹⁸⁸ But I discuss Ascham’s treatment of the Fathers at more length in the final part of this chapter.

Set against the broader context of the Reformation, Ascham’s cognizance of Pighius’s impact on the theological landscape is further proof of his theological acumen. That he had read correctly the growing strength of force posed by adherents of Pighius is surely reflected by the multiple references to Pighius in another work on the sacrament published in 1550 by Hutchinson, one of the leading Cambridge disputants of 1547. Like Ascham, Hutchinson was keen to expose claims made by Pighius concerning Scripture, deliberately using against him an accusation Pighius had once used against Protestants, namely that God’s Word was a

¹⁸⁴ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp.355-6.

¹⁸⁵ Commission for the Visitation of the University as set out in Cooper, *Annals*, p.24.

¹⁸⁶ *Apologia*, p.147.

¹⁸⁷ *Apologia*, p.145.

¹⁸⁸ Calvin, *Bondage and Liberation*, ed., Lane, pp.74 and 180.

‘nose of wax’.¹⁸⁹ A Pighius faction was evidently a problem at national level too. Cranmer accused Gardiner of using Pighius for ‘a good part of his divinity’. Ponet, Bishop of Winchester, published a tract in 1556 against ‘a blasphemose book gatherid by D. Steph. Gardiner, of late Lord Chauncelar, D. Smyth of Oxford, Pighius, and other papists...’.¹⁹⁰ Other notable Protestant reformers would also refer to Pighius’s papal support and his various doctrines in their theological polemic: Bale referred to Pighius as a ‘idell brained papyste’ and John Knox, a well-known devotee of Calvin, called Pighius a ‘peverse papist’ in his arguments about predestination.¹⁹¹ The conflict surrounding Pighius was one that was played out not only within the precincts of Cambridge University but nationally and internationally. It was one that Ascham, with no little prescience, recognised the importance of, explored and exposed in his *Apologia*. Once again, Ascham appeared to fit the mould of a reformer prepared to do combat in complex and controversial theological terrain.

3.8 Independent Thinker: *Sola Scriptura* and the Fathers

Ascham was a theological reformer who had allied himself to the Protestant cause. But Ascham was by no means someone who simply swam with the Protestant tide, embracing its ideas and submitting to its influences in an unthinking way. He was a man who was firmly in charge of his own conclusions about religious and theological reform. There were two areas in particular where he seemed to demonstrate his independence as a theologian, firstly that of Scriptural investigation and interpretation, and secondly the Fathers. The principle of *sola scriptura* was, in particular, an important vehicle for many of his individual judgments which sometimes took directions that other Protestants did not. This was especially the case when he was applying his own linguistic expertise to the original Greek. The issue of human doctrine relative to Scripture was also one about which Ascham would hold some rigid and quite idiosyncratic views. The scope for theological independence which Ascham’s work reflects serves as a useful reminder of the heterogeneity and highly personal positions that could exist within the overarching Protestant movement.

¹⁸⁹ Hutchinson, *The image of God, or laie ma[n]s booke in whyche the ryghte knoweledge of God is disclosed, and diuerse doutes besydes the principall matter* (London, 1550) set out in *Hutchinson Works*, ed., Bruce, p.34.

¹⁹⁰ Cranmer, *An answer of the Most Reuerend Father in God Thomas Archebyshop of Canterburie, primate of all Englande and metropolitane vnto a crafty and sophisticall cauillation deuised by Stephen Gardiner ...agaynst the trewe and godly doctrine of the moste holy sacrament of the body and bloud of our sauieur Iesu Christe* (London, 1551) in *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer relative to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper*, ed., Rev. J.E., Cox (Cambridge, 1844), p.127; Ponet, *An apologie fully aunsvveringe by Scriptures and aunceant doctors* (Strasbourg, 1556) (STC 20175a).

¹⁹¹ Bale’s parallel commentary on Leland’s *laboryouse iourney [and] serche ...for Englandes antiquitees* (London, 1549) (STC 58:05), sig.C6^r; Knox, *On Predestination* set out in *The Works of John Knox* ed., D. Laing (Edinburgh, 1865), vol.5, p.73.

To assert that the unifying principle of Ascham's *Apologia* was *sola scriptura* does not get one very far. The primacy of Scripture was a universal *sine qua non* of the early modern period and a core conviction of the Reformation generally, Scriptural supremacy acting as a touchstone as much for conservatives as Protestants.¹⁹² However, adherence to the principle, even among Protestants, was not quite as absolute as all the professions and declarations at first suggested. All Protestants claimed to base their doctrine on the pure Word of God, but in practice some were more exacting about this than others.

As far as Edward's reign was concerned, Scripture-reading was a high priority. For the Protestants now in power the Bible was a treasure trove of divine wisdom to be inwardly digested; reading of it could be transformative and was thought to facilitate a direct communion with God.¹⁹³ The regime's Homilies of July 1547 opened with a homily on Scripture, entitled 'A Fruiteful Exhortation to the Readyng of Holye Scripture'.¹⁹⁴ One of the first pieces of legislation was the Statute of Treasons which lifted all restrictions on the reading of the Bible.¹⁹⁵ The 1547 Injunctions made it compulsory for every parish in the country to hold a Bible in English and allow free access to it.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless, running alongside this was considerable ambivalence about the notion that everyone had a God-given right to read and interpret these complex documents as they chose. *Sola scriptura* ran counter to the necessary controls and requirements for uniformity that any government, especially one which followed straight after Henry's magisterial Reformation imposed from above, both desired and needed. In the Henrician Reformation, although Scripture had been centre-stage, serving an important purpose in his divorce proceedings and the development of the royal supremacy, Henry had actually evinced little desire to encourage widespread Bible reading by the masses, with initial encouragement soon giving way to constraint, particularly with the 'Act for the Advancement of True Religion' in 1543 which imposed exacting restrictions on Bible-reading. Henry also ensured that any public access to the Bible was accompanied by carefully directed doctrinal statements.¹⁹⁷ Edward's policies were more overtly Protestant,

¹⁹² The competing claims to Scriptural authority were, for example, a major element in the textual quarrels sparked by Gardiner's 1546 *Devil's Sophistrie*, the very preface of which had informed the reader that they were about to 'Receive the true understanding of Scriptures'. Overt Gospel brinkmanship followed in responses to Gardiner penned by Hooper, Gilby, Turner and Bale.

¹⁹³ T. George, *Reading Scripture with the Reformers* (Downers Grove III, 2011), pp.19-20.

¹⁹⁴ *Certain sermons, or homilies*, sig.A3^v and ff.

¹⁹⁵ Repeal of Statutes as to Treasons, 1547 (1 Edward VI c.12).

¹⁹⁶ Injunctions, sigs.a4^v-b1^r.

¹⁹⁷ Including the Ten Articles, the Bishops' Book, the Six Articles and the King's Book.

and yet there was still a need for checks and balances. In the December 1547 *Proclamation against the unreverent disputers and talkers of the Sacrament*, enthusiasm for the private reading of Scripture was tempered by a serious warning against the drawing of any kind of conclusions or open discussion. Any further analysis of Scripture, it decreed, would only be permitted through official promulgations: ‘the King together with his Council and clergy’ would ‘desyne, declare and setfurth...what termes and wordes may justely be spoken thereby other than be expressly in the scripture conteyned...’.¹⁹⁸ As the new administration soon realised, *sola scriptura* in its purist form was unworkable.¹⁹⁹ As Davies observes, the fear of radicalism during the Edwardine years was high and the one thing that all the heterodox opinions of English radicals had in common was personal Bible reading and interpretation.²⁰⁰

In contrast to official wariness, Ascham and certain other reformers asserted a more fearless Biblicism. Ascham’s *Apologia* was an act of *sola scriptura* par excellence. In common with a number of other mainly University-trained reformers, it showed how, through an intellectualization of the process, *sola scriptura* could be properly and fully actualized. It was a strident demonstration of independent interpretation, ease of navigation and ownership of the written Gospel Word. This was underscored firstly by a strong emphasis on the textual nature of the sacred Word, an approach which treated the Bible as a text that could be read, studied and understood by the individual. A key illustration of this was the way in which Ascham directly compared the Mass text, the Missal (or Mass canon) to the ‘true’ text, Scripture. In fact, in his *Apologia*, Ascham framed the debate about the Mass and the Lord’s Supper in the following way: ‘There are two books which have fuelled this entire controversy between the Mass and the Supper. One is the New Testament of Jesus Christ, and the other, the most revered Missal of the priests. And these books will, by my reckoning, determine this whole debate of ours’.²⁰¹ From the outset, Ascham conceived of the Eucharistic debate as a literary conflict, and time and time again, he referred in his tract to ‘books’ and ‘authors’.

A number of other contemporary tracts by men who had been in receipt of a University education also seem to have approached the Eucharistic debate in terms of a textual contest between competing sacred literature. Guest’s 1548 treatise was set within very literary

¹⁹⁸ STC 7812.

¹⁹⁹ B. Gordon (ed.), *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth Century Europe* (Aldershot, 1996), vol.1, pp.5-6.

²⁰⁰ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, chapter 2 and particularly p.68.

²⁰¹ *Apologia*, p.14 and he made a similar point on p.79.

parameters. In his work, he set out words of the canon, only to claim ‘...if their masse canon were to be understood after hys gramer sense, it must ...be condemyned and canceled out of the masse boke as heresy to god or as disobeyaunce to the King’.²⁰² Gilby, in his rejoinder to Gardiner, presented the elements of the Mass almost as though they were chapters of a book: he began by referring to ‘the documents of the Pope’ and then itemized the separate aspects of the Mass and their ‘authors’ – ‘Celestinus ordained the prayers that the priest says when he raises himself up for Mass, Damasus ordained Confiteor, Gregory caused kyrie elesion to be saidPope Leo ordained the insence....Pope Alexander made *qui pridie*, Leo made *hanc igitur*’, and so it went on.²⁰³

Another related and important demonstration of a full commitment to *sola scriptura* was a close and sustained attention to the actual wording of Scripture. The words themselves, some reformers insisted, provided all the answers to the truth about the Eucharist. Hooper, for instance, insisted that ‘it is the office of everi man to know the maner of speech in the Scripture and to judge according unto the meaning of the wordes’ and focused at length on the words of institution in order to simultaneously disclose the real meaning of the Lord’s Supper and call into question the doctrine of transubstantiation.²⁰⁴ His insistence that ‘There must be as good hede yeven to the meaning of the wordes’ was further captured in his constant quest to discover the semantic support for transubstantiation, asking ‘What were the wordes that alteryd the substaynce of bread and wyne?’ and concluding that ‘It was not this verbe *est* that dyd it.’²⁰⁵ Likewise, Gilby was adamant about the need for verbal proof from Scripture for Eucharistic doctrine. In order to rebut corporeal presence he pointed to the lack of Scriptural words to support it: having stated that he ‘wyll bringe forth the whole texte of Matt, Mark and Luke...and declare their sense and meaneing’, he showed ‘by which wordes it maye appeare that Christ dyd meane no chaunge of natures or traunssubstantiacion’, adding ‘thei are christes wone words who can not lye’.²⁰⁶ As regards the sacrifice of the Mass, Gilby placed full reliance on the wording of Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews ‘which I shall truly reporte wythout any gloses or far-fetched argumentes’.²⁰⁷ He constantly cited Christ’s words, stressing ‘the words are plain’ and asserting again his total commitment to Scriptural authority: ‘Where the wordes of scripture be plaine, evident, manifest and confirme the

²⁰² Guest, *A Treatise againste the preuee masse*, sig. D4^r.

²⁰³ Gilby, *An Answer*, sigs.G5^r and ff.

²⁰⁴ Hooper, *Answer*, sig.R3^v.

²⁰⁵ Hooper, *Answer*, sig.C1^v and C3^v.

²⁰⁶ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.D4^r-D5^r.

²⁰⁷ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.C7^v.

catholike truth: ther the devill diviseth an other meaneing and adviseth his scholers that the wordes be nothing without the meaning'.²⁰⁸

For Ascham too it was the very words of the Bible that could prove or disprove theological questions about the sacrament:

What is it to hear Christ? To hear his Word. This thing will remove all controversies. Hear what Christ says: 'He who hears my words is from God; he who does not hear, is not from God'.²⁰⁹ It is on account of this that we recognise the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Therefore, those who rely upon the Word of God follow the spirit of truth.²¹⁰

He then proceeded to define the terms of the Eucharistic dispute as a strictly semantic test:

'Therefore, let us settle this matter with the Word of God alone'.²¹¹ He also made it clear that it was possible to understand the sense of Christ's words.²¹² Like a number of other reformers, he paid considerable attention to the precise words of institution, quoting and analysing in sequence:

Let us listen to the words of the supper. 'While they were at supper'. Here you have no advantage for this is common to everyone. 'Jesus receiving the bread'. Now this is your business. But I fancy that to receive bread is not the same as to sacrifice. For he who receives has not yet offered it. ...What follows? 'He broke it and gave it'... This 'to break' is their 'to sacrifice'. For on this point they clearly depart from Christ and turn away from him, or rather, they distort everything with a view to their own private sacrifice.²¹³

There was a clear message here, namely that with a full application of linguistic scholarship, the truths of Scripture could be accessed.

A focus on words was further reinforced through direct references to the original wording of the Bible. The linguistic facility this required was considerably rarer and it is important not to forget what an electrifying and empowering experience it must have been to read and quote the authentic communications of God. Gilby, for example, would incorporate the Hebrew of the Old Testament into his Biblical proofs against Gardiner. Out of the small pool of those who had the ability to read the Greek, Ascham went further than most in the extent to which he investigated the Greek and invested the words with such a weight of meaning.

²⁰⁸ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.E4^r and M3^v-M4^r.

²⁰⁹ John 8:47.

²¹⁰ *Apologia*, p.19.

²¹¹ *Apologia*, p.24.

²¹² *Apologia*, p.126.

²¹³ *Apologia*, pp.78-9.

Page after page of his *Apologia* was given over to a meticulous dissection of the actual meaning of Greek terms from Scripture in order to illustrate, as forcefully and immediately as possible, the truth about the sacrament as he saw it. This entailed, for example, listing a number of Greek terms that could feasibly validate the Mass sacrifice:

That sacrifice which our priests arrogate to themselves alone and which they define within certain limits comes under one of these headings, or (in my opinion) it doesn't have a place in Scripture: 'hilasmos' (a propitiation), 'thusia' (a sacrificial offering), 'prosphora' (an offering), 'dōra' (gifts), 'leitourgia' (public service), 'prebuterion' (presbytery), 'diakonia' (ministration), 'oikonomia' (administration), 'episkopē' (supervision), 'presbeuein' (to pay honour), 'spendesthai' (to pour a libation), 'hierateuein' (to be a priest).²¹⁴

He then carefully explored the nuances and connotations of each of these words in various parts of the New Testament to demonstrate that the Catholic interpretation could not be supported, for example:

Does (the term) 'hilasmos' (propitiation) contain your priesthood? Christ prohibits this. For the propitiation is attributed in Scripture to Christ alone. John says in his Epistle 1:2 'And he himself is a "hilasmos" (propitiation) for our sins and not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world'. ... But those who don't listen to the voice of the Lord (will) go after their own inventions. John again says in chapter 4 'He sent his Son as a "hilasmos" (propitiation) for our sins'. And in Paul to the Romans: 'Whom God hath set forth to be a "hilasmos" (propitiation) through faith in his blood'. And in the Psalm 'that he is a "hilasmos" (propitiation) for you'.²¹⁵

And the scrutiny pursuant to each term went on for several pages.

Sola scriptura was really taken to its extreme where those who had the linguistic apparatus to examine in detail what the words of Scripture actually said and meant allowed those words to determine directly their own theological conclusions (a point I develop in more detail in chapter 5 in relation to Greek philology). The perceived inviolability of the original words simply added to the certainty of those positions and such a process epitomised the theological independence that posed problems for those in authority. An excellent example of this were some of the conclusions Ascham reached in his *Apologia* concerning the presence (which I outlined above). Set in the full context of the narrative, it was evident, for instance, that Ascham's reference to 'a sacrifice that doesn't comprise a visible offering, but a spiritual victim' was made pursuant to his investigation of the Greek term *thusia* and Peter's reference to '...a holy priesthood to offer up *thusias pneumatikas* ('spiritual sacrifices') which Ascham

²¹⁴ *Apologia*, p.88.

²¹⁵ *Apologia*, pp.89-90. The details of the references and quotations are given in appendix 1.

had cited a little earlier.²¹⁶ The same was true of his references to ‘commemoration’ and ‘memory’. Ascham here was doing nothing more than cleaving to the words of institution which he carefully rehearsed, adding ‘I eat the body, I drink the blood; I do everything in remembrance of Christ; I willingly omit nothing which Christ instituted; I rashly admit nothing which Christ has not prescribed, and I keep myself totally within the bounds of his Word. I am secure in that I do not deviate from the commandment of God...’.²¹⁷ Private interpretation had led Ascham to formulate theological convictions which were racing ahead of the official line. The unpredictability of an independent application of *sola scriptura* could not be clearer.

A final important feature of those who were most vociferous about *sola scriptura* was the eschewal of all that fell beyond the remit of God’s Word. Such extra-Scriptural materials were termed ‘unwritten verities’.²¹⁸ At one level, this tension between the sanctity of Scripture and ‘unwritten verities’ was one that ran directly along confessional lines. It was certainly one that the newly installed Protestant regime under Edward made much of. A very public example was made, for instance, of the conservative Richard Smith who had been compelled to publicly recant his defence of the unwritten verities of the Church at St Paul’s Cross in May 1547 and again at Oxford in July, and instead to accept the authority of Scripture as higher than that of tradition.²¹⁹ The Protestant Turner’s *cum privilegio* tract of 1548 took a similar swipe at conservative claims of equivalence between Scripture and unwritten verities. The jingle ‘The Messe speaketh ...[to those] which love Doctrine Catholical and do believe unwritten veritie to be as good as Scriptures sinceritie’ was placed prominently in the introduction page to the work.²²⁰

However, the main dichotomy that formed the backbone of Ascham’s *Apologia* was not the one that so straightforwardly opposed Protestant support of *sola scriptura* with a Catholic adherence to the unwritten verities or tradition of the Church. He instead focused on the abhorrence of a more general notion, that of ‘human doctrine’. This was a category broad enough to include the doctrinal pronouncements of a government as well as a misguided

²¹⁶ *Apologia*, pp.104 and 91. 1 Peter 2:5.

²¹⁷ *Apologia*, p.46 and pp.81-82

²¹⁸ See, for example, P. Marshall ‘The Debate over “Unwritten Verities” in Early Reformation England’ in Gordon (ed.) *Protestant History and Identity*, pp.60-77.

²¹⁹ Smith’s *Brief Treatise setting forth Diverse Truths* of 1547 had claimed that they had equal authority to that of Scripture (Marshall, ‘The Debate over “Unwritten Verities”’, p.73).

²²⁰ Turner, *A New Dialogue*, sig.A1^v.

Church and was one that cut right across the confessional divide. From the outset of his tract, Ascham denounced the error of human doctrine. He was adamant that ‘When I speak of human doctrine, I speak of not a trifling matter but one of great significance’.²²¹ The dichotomy of Scriptural sanctity and human doctrine actually set the parameters of the whole debate and he prefaced his arguments with a prayer: ‘But above all, I pray for our Lord Jesus Christ to dissipate in this disputation, all the obfuscations of human doctrine with the splendour of his Word so that the truth may not be overthrown ...’.²²² Throughout, the *Apologia* emphatically and repeatedly rejected all that fell outside Scripture and references to ‘human doctrine’ dominated his work.²²³ He even co-opted Psalm 54 to his cause, interpreting its words in such a way that reinforced his argument against the adherence to human doctrine over divine.²²⁴ So suspicious was he of human doctrine that he frequently cast it in terms of violation and forgery.²²⁵ What was clear from Ascham’s *Apologia* was that his distaste for anything that fell beyond the strict Word of God extended even to the construction of a theological position or dogma based on Scripture but not actually found in the words of Scripture.

The tendency to formulate such artificial constructs and apply unscriptural theological terminology was particularly common when it came to the sacrament of the Eucharist. The term ‘transubstantiation’ was a prime example. Although there can be no doubt that Ascham completely denied the notion of transubstantiation by the time he wrote the *Apologia*, he did not once refer to the term. Ryan refers to Ascham’s omission of the term as a ‘prudent one’ given the timing of the tract.²²⁶ However, from what we have seen of Ascham so far, he was theologically bold and outspoken and not overly concerned with toeing the line. It was almost certainly the case that Ascham did not mention the term as Scripture did not. The fact he did not engage with the codified term ‘transubstantiation’ reflected not so much theological timidity but rather his scrupulous insistence on focusing upon Scripture alone. Evidence of distrust of human error is often, in historiographical terms, associated with the realm of humanism. Erasmus’s name, for example, is regularly used in discussions about

²²¹ *Apologia*, p.3. Human doctrine was included within his extensive ship analogy that begins the work, being described as the ‘skill’ element of the rowers on the ship (*Apologia*, p.3).

²²² *Apologia*, p.15.

²²³ The fact he tended to refer to ‘human doctrine’ rather than ‘unwritten verities’ may again point to his Lutheran instincts and his full assimilation of Luther’s emphasis on the degeneracy of man.

²²⁴ *Apologia*, p.17. This is not necessarily the actual message of the Psalm which laments the betrayal by an intimate.

²²⁵ *Apologia*, pp.27-28 and 31.

²²⁶ Ryan, *Ascham*, p.96.

suspicion of doctrinaire thinking on the basis that he was a figure whose disputes were theological, but whose approach was untheological, whose gospel was definite but undogmatic, and whose theology was quite simply the study of Scripture according to its own critical canons.²²⁷ Differences in ‘habits of thought’ or epistemology are also highlighted: a mental habit of systematic doubt is often cited as emblematic of the humanist tradition which conflicted with the certainty of the doctrinal dogma of theologians.²²⁸ It would, however, be doing a gross disservice to Ascham to apply such a basic template and describe his Biblicist approach in the *Apologia* simply as ‘humanist’. His approach in fact seems closer to that of Tyndale than that of Erasmus. As Tyndale’s most recent biographer has observed, what was striking about his work was his clarity and determination to put nothing in the way of Scripture being understood; the reader comes away from his reading his works knowing much of what was in the New Testament.²²⁹ As a direct consequence of making the Bible central, he rarely discussed actual doctrine.²³⁰ Ascham and Tyndale were completely convinced about the ability of the Gospels to steer and guide the Christian believer without the need for external assistance.

Besides Ascham, strong reservations about doctrinal dogma or systems can be identified in several other progressive reformers’ Eucharistic works. Gilby rejected Gardiner’s whole approach to the Eucharist as misguidedly artificial:

Your termes of realities, qualities, accedentes and dimencions favour nothinge of the spirite of God...[these] favoureth of the rotten pastures and stinkinge fleshie braines of your dreameinge doctours – Dunse, Thomas de Aquinas and Petrus Lombardus... What other thinge are these sophisticall termes of realitie, quantitie, accedentes, dimencions and alteracions?... They can not be founde in the bokes of the holy spirite of the holy Scripture.... Thys your boke [is] all grounded upon man.²³¹

The vivid and dramatic recreation of the trial of Anne Askew which was edited by Bale appealed to the same principle. In these two detailed inquisitions by priests, the reader was presented with the extraordinary image of a humble woman displaying her intimate

²²⁷ E. Rummel, *The Confessionalisation of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford, 2000), p.58; McConica, *Humanists*, pp.12 and 24.

²²⁸ Rummel, *Confessionalisation*, introduction and chapter 3.

²²⁹ D. Daniell, *William Tyndale: a biography* (Yale and New Haven, 2001), pp.113 and 220. Tyndale’s *A briefe declaration of the sacraments* (London, 1548, but originally printed in 1533), one of the main aims of which was to refute the Mass sacrifice, was very Scriptural in its orientation. So too was his *Supper of the Lord* (London, 1533 and subsequently reprinted in 1547, though Daniell casts doubt on his authorship of this in *Tyndale*, p.212. Tyndale’s emphasis on the detail of Scripture was perhaps best captured in his *A Pathway into Holy Scripture* (London, 1531/2).

²³⁰ S.I. Gray, ‘Tyndale and the Text in the Heart’, *Reformation*, 16, 1 (2011), p.93.

²³¹ Gilby, *An Answer*, sigs.B7^v and B8^f.

knowledge of the words of Scripture and standing by them to the death. The entire tracts were built around the direct confrontation of man's theological construction (the priests' questions) with the words of Scripture (articulated and defended by Askew). So, for example, we read that she was asked whether she believed the sacrament hanging over the altar was the very body of Christ really. Her response challenged the very basis of the question; her assertion that 'the term "really" is not in the sacred Scriptures' suggested that the very question constituted human invention.²³² Askew continually retorted that 'these were not her words' or that she subscribed only to 'what Scripture agreed to'.²³³

This opposition that certain reformers who knew their Biblical text very well expressed for human doctrine was more comprehensive in scope than just an objection to the traditions of the Catholic Church. It encompassed the formulation of any sort of doctrine, either through terms or policies, which were not included and therefore verifiable in the Word of God itself. Although the examples I set out above mainly related to Catholic doctrine, such as transubstantiation, this sort of opposition could easily be directed towards any attempts even on the part of a Protestant government to codify and paraphrase in the name of uniformity (and we may recall the abovementioned wording of the regime's Proclamation about designing what terms may justly be spoken other than those contained in Scripture). The potential for private *sola scriptura* to collide with others who counted themselves as Protestants was not insignificant.

To conclude this review of Ascham's Biblical independence, it is interesting to consider the nature of the Biblical citations in his *Apologia*, particularly those from the New Testament.²³⁴ His citations which did not follow, with any kind of consistency, a single authority or version are a good reflection of his autonomy and confidence. His Latin quotations from the New Testament often seemed to follow the Latin Vulgate, though this was generally the case when the same wording was used by Erasmus; in any case, Ascham had included in his *Apologia* an explicit rejection of Jerome's Vulgate. When it came to a choice between the two, Ascham seemed, on the whole, to prefer to follow Erasmus's lead: for example, quoting Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians in support of an argument about adherence only to the Word of God, he utilized Erasmus's *Nè turbemini, nequē per sermonem, nequē per Epistolam*,

²³² Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, p.148

²³³ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed., Christmas, pp.150 and 176-177.

²³⁴ Those from the Old Testament generally follow the Vulgate or are paraphrases, suggesting Ascham was to some extent relying on memory.

tanquàm à nobis profectam ('Don't be thrown into confusion either by a speech or a letter, as though it was produced by us') over the Vulgate's *neque terreamini* (rather than *ne turbemini*) and *missam* (rather than *profectam*).²³⁵ This was not, however, always so. On at least one occasion, for example when quoting 1 Corinthians 11:27, Ascham cleaved more closely to the Vulgate than Erasmus, opting for the Vulgate's verb ('to eat') *manducare* over Erasmus's *edere* and the Vulgate's *calix* ('cup') over Erasmus's *poculum*.²³⁶ Ascham even seemed prepared to follow, if he deemed it appropriate, the form of Latin suggested by a Church Father. When Ascham cited Matthew 17:5 'This is my very beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Hear him'²³⁷, instead of Erasmus's ('pleased') *complacitum est* and the Vulgate's *compalculi*, Ascham deployed the word *sensi*, the verb which Cyprian had in fact used in his translation of that verse.²³⁸ When citing Matthew 5:13, a verse which refers to 'the salt that have lost the saltnes, what shalbe seasoned therwyth? It is thenceforth good for nothyng, but to be cast out, and to be troden downe of men' (as per Great Bible), Ascham seems to have followed Jerome: instead of Scripture's reference to 'being cast out and trodden under foot', he deployed the phrase 'flung into a shit-pit' (*sterquilinum proiicere*).²³⁹ The point is that in Ascham's *Apologia*, there was no consistent pattern of usage.

It is very likely that Ascham was in fact doing what Erasmus himself had done and translating for himself from the original Greek.²⁴⁰ Evidence of this emerges especially in places where Ascham has diverged from the Latin of the Vulgate and/or Erasmus. When quoting John 4:24, instead of using a relative clause like the other two (*eos qui adorant eum* '[it behoves] those who worship'), he used, as the Greek does, a participle - *adorantes* ('[those] worshipping') (προσκυνουντας (*proskunountas*) in the Greek).²⁴¹ Ascham, it appears, considered that his knowledge of Greek fully entitled him to produce his own version of the Latin and he did not feel bound to conform to established authority in this regard. Indeed, his Latin Biblical quotations were regularly formulated from Ascham's own stock of classical vocabulary and idiom. Ascham used the more classical *auferret* (transitive)

²³⁵ *Apologia*, p.132. 2 Thessalonians 2:2. When quoting Greek, Ascham always followed Erasmus's version.

²³⁶ *Apologia*, p.72.

²³⁷ *Apologia*, p.29.

²³⁸ Cyprian's *Epistles* vol.3, part 3.

²³⁹ *Apologia*, p.63. Jerome's commentary on the passage (Matthew 5:13) in *Commentarii, in Sophoniam*, chapter II b (I thank Dr Fred Schurink for this reference). It is possible that Ascham was also inclined to use the term *sterquilinum* because of its common application in the genre of Roman comedy.

²⁴⁰ Ascham owned his own copy of the Greek New Testament (see chapter 1).

²⁴¹ *Apologia*, pp.47-48. There is another similar example of this on p.111 when he is quoting Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews 5.4, Ascham again preferring the participle *vocatus* as Greek uses (albeit a present) καλουμενος (*kaloumenos*) over a relative clause used in Erasmus and the Vulgate.

in place of the (intransitive) verb *discederet* when quoting 2 Corinthians 12:7-8 (Paul, asks the Lord to remove bodily pain for him). In a series of quotations from Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians verse 14 where he warns about the dangers of using incomprehensible language, Ascham's Latin lexicon employed some distinctly idiosyncratic vocabulary. He used, for example, the rather more nuanced *alienus* in place of Erasmus's *varius* and the Vulgate's *alius*. He even seemed prepared to add his own doctrinal gloss to certain words: in respect of Matthew 5:13, the same verse referred to above, he did not translate 'being good for nothing' literally, but had instead 'those who are unworthy'; theologically speaking *indigni* was a highly loaded word.

Finally, it is possible that Ascham even felt emboldened enough to allow a vernacular Bible from another country to sway the formulation of his Scriptural quotes.²⁴² On a couple of occasions Ascham's choice of wording seems to have been informed by Luther. For example, when quoting Revelation 22:8 ('John in a moment of atonement, prostrated himself at the feet of the Angel'), rather than use the Latin employed by the Vulgate and Erasmus (the verb *cado* 'to fall', the equivalent of the Greek's verb *πιπτω* (*piptō*)), Ascham very interestingly used the verb *prostravit* which of course also chimed in with Luther's view of the abject state of mankind.²⁴³ That Ascham felt confident and capable enough to act as arbiter in his Biblical citation is a powerful reflection of the affinity he felt he had with the Word of God and the self-sufficiency he exercised as a theologian.

To the extent that the Reformation debates centred around Scripture, so too did they around the Fathers.²⁴⁴ The final theological dimension of Ascham's *Apologia* to discuss here is his treatment of the Fathers. Ascham's incorporation of patristic references into his *Apologia* demonstrated a clear affinity for the Fathers and their writings. In co-opting the Fathers to a theological dispute which essentially revolved around the interpretation of Scripture, Ascham's approach was, at one level, very much in harmony with other mainstream Protestants. At the same time, his work reflected the latitude for independent formulation and divergence that was also possible in the Protestant Reformation.

²⁴²There is no obvious influence from Tyndale's English Bible.

²⁴³*Apologia*, p.23.

²⁴⁴As George puts it, the Reformation was in many ways as much a struggle over the Church Fathers as it was over Scripture itself (*Reading Scripture with the Reformers*, p.13). Those on all sides were interested in co-opting the Fathers to prop up their causes.

Knowledge of the texts of the Fathers, especially the Greek ones, was rare even by 1600.²⁴⁵ A good working knowledge of the Fathers in the 1540s was therefore impressive by anyone's standards and a sure index of a thoroughgoing theological capability. Throughout the *Apologia* Ascham cited a wide range of patristic texts. These included works by Augustine, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Tertullian, Irenaeus and Ambrose. The fact that two of these, Chrysostom and Irenaeus, were Greek Fathers fits well with Ascham's regular insistence elsewhere in his tract on the importance of antiquity and, when citing certain Fathers, he often did so in the following terms: 'the oldest Fathers', the 'common agreement of the oldest Doctors',²⁴⁶ and 'that very ancient author'.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, the nature of Ascham's references to the Fathers was far from cosmetic in nature. Rather, they were detailed and marshalled in order to underscore a variety of theological points. He regularly adduced Augustine, for example, expressly referring to a number of his works in order to rebut the theological claims with which he disagreed. Augustine was drawn on as evidence for, *inter alia*, the reality of the bread and wine in the sacrament and the fallacy of the adoration in the Mass ceremony.²⁴⁸ Ascham also used Augustine repeatedly to help support his argument about the Eucharistic sacrifice. He relied on Augustine to prove the one-off nature of Christ's sacrifice on the cross: 'A victim is sacrificed in the sacrament, that is, (according to Augustine) a victim having been sacrificed once and killed for us is celebrated and proclaimed'.²⁴⁹ He used him too to help support his argument about the nature of all Christian sacrifices beyond that of Christ's single sacrifice: 'as Augustine teaches in many places with express words,... the sacrifices of the New Testament are those with which we offer praises and gestures of thanks to God'.²⁵⁰ He also made it clear that he was more than up to the task of matching and rebutting any patristic claims made by his opponents with his own patristic knowledge:

But because you are accustomed to follow the Fathers more willingly than the words of the Lord, heed what the most learned doctor and most sacred Father Cyprian says about not changing this Lord's Supper... If Cyprian says 'in the sacrifice which is Christ only Christ is to be followed', assuredly, it behoves us to obey and to do that which Christ did, and what he ordered must be done...²⁵¹

²⁴⁵ W.P. Haaugaard 'Renaissance Patristic Scholarship and Theology in Sixteenth-Century England' *S.C.J.*, 10 (1979), pp.48-49; S.L. Greenslade, *The English Reformers and the Fathers of the Church* (Oxford, 1960), p.10

²⁴⁶ The term 'Doctors' was used interchangeably with 'Fathers' by contemporaries.

²⁴⁷ *Apologia*, pp.77, 140, 147 and 139.

²⁴⁸ *Apologia*, pp.50-52.

²⁴⁹ *Apologia*, p.137.

²⁵⁰ *Apologia*, p.142.

²⁵¹ *Apologia*, p.29.

In viewing the Fathers as useful authorities in the Eucharistic debate, Ascham had much in common with other Protestants. Just as Ascham coopted Cyprian to his cause explicitly in response to his opponents' patristically-based arguments, many Protestants recognized the polemical force the Fathers had in countering the appropriation of patristic texts by the conservatives and exposing their errors. There was also a widespread appreciation of the authenticity and gravity patristic writing could lend to theological argument and the interpretation of Scripture. Ascham had carefully emphasised the 'oldest' Fathers and for many Protestants the citation of patristic texts went to the heart of a battle for the sanctity of Christian antiquity. Especially for Protestants newly installed in government, the Fathers of the Church could usefully help to combat charges of innovation directed at them from opponents.²⁵² The new Edwardine government was fully aware of the extra weight which the Fathers could bring to a theological case and the deployment of patristic authority was particularly prevalent in officially sanctioned documents on the Eucharist. A vast number and range of Doctors and Fathers were cited in a work by a clerk of the King's mint and committed Protestant, John Mardeley.²⁵³ Published in 1548 *cum privilegio*, his Eucharistic piece in verse entitled *A shorte resytal of certayne holy doctors which proveth that the naturall body of Christ is not conteyned in the sacrament of the Lord's supper but figuratively* used the Fathers to buttress an argument about the presence.²⁵⁴ Somerset and Cranmer regarded them as an invaluable source of authority and encouraged new forms of recourse to the Fathers.²⁵⁵ Scholars have affirmed the important role patristic writing played in Cranmer's debates with opponents and in the development of his own doctrinal positions.²⁵⁶ Their importance to Cranmer was reflected in the title of his seminal Eucharistic work, *The Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Saviour Christ, ...grounded on God's holy word and approved by the content of the most ancient doctors of the Church*. Awareness of and reliance placed on patristic works also grew rapidly in the Universities. Patristics played a significant role in the 1549 Oxford disputations between Martyr and a group of traditionalists.²⁵⁷ In fact, use of patristic texts was so prolific that the president, Richard Cox, wearied by the patristic sparring, reminded

²⁵² Greenslade, *Reformers and Fathers*, p.6; A. McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Oxford and New York), p.168.

²⁵³ Mardeley ODNB. He wrote treatises on the Lord's Supper during the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth.

²⁵⁴ London, 1548 (STC 17318).

²⁵⁵ M. Vessey, 'English Translations of the Latin Fathers, 1517-1611' in I. Backus (ed.), *Reception of the Church Fathers in the West* (Leiden, 1997), p.791.

²⁵⁶ D.G Selwyn, 'Cranmer's Library: its potential for Reformation Studies' in Ayris and Selwyn (eds.), *Cranmer, Churchman and Scholar*, pp.67-70.

²⁵⁷ Haaugaard, 'Patristic Scholarship', p.52.

disputers not to take them as their *principia*.²⁵⁸ Considerable emphasis was placed on the testimony of the Fathers in the 1549 Cambridge disputations, reflected particularly in the summing-up of Ridley, the man presiding over the event.²⁵⁹ The former Cambridge disputant Hutchinson quoted the Fathers prolifically in his sermons of 1550, demonstrating his deference further by detailing all their dates.²⁶⁰

Notwithstanding the increasing reliance being placed on the testimony of the Fathers, there was a general assumption within the Protestant movement that Scripture remained the ultimate touchstone, that the authority of the Church Fathers remained subordinate and, in any case, were only valid when they agreed with God's Word.²⁶¹ Beyond this, however, there was little in the way of published guidance about the precise status of the Fathers relative to Scripture.²⁶² The nature of that relationship was left up to individual reformers to negotiate and articulate. Hooper, in his *Answer to Gardiner on the Eucharist*, whilst full of praise for Fathers where they conformed to Scripture, was clear that the Fathers were not beyond censure where they departed from Scripture:

And a notable thing is it to mark the godly fathers in there works wheras... they allege not only the Scripture, but also the testimony and example of the primitive church... But if any error be in there wrytinges, we may leave it by the autorite of the scripture and offend nothing at all... I would not in this mater of the sacrament rehearse the mynd of one doctor because we may so fully and playnely know by thonly scripture what the supper is and how it shuld be used;

and, in respect of Cyprian, he commented 'I will not follow Cyprian but the instruction of Christ. I know that he was just a man and had his faults'.²⁶³ Becon, in his later work on the Eucharist, a comparison of the Mass and the Lord's Supper, would also argue for the inadmissibility of the Fathers where their teaching strayed from Scriptural precepts. After quoting multiple phrases from the Fathers who 'have wonderfully garnished and set out this holy banquet of the Lord', he wrote 'neither let any man cast in my teeth the Fathers although never so old holy and learned if they err, dissent and go away never so little from the doctrine

²⁵⁸ Greenslade, *Fathers*, p.3.

²⁵⁹ Ridley's Determination is set out in full in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1570 edition) book 4, pp.pp.1594-5; see particularly the Fathers rehearsed in the 'second ground'.

²⁶⁰ Hutchinson, *Faithful Declaration*, ed., Bruce, p.274ff.

²⁶¹ Selderhuis, *Calvin Handbook*, pp.105-6.

²⁶² Greenslade, *English Reformers and Fathers of the Church*, p.16.

²⁶³ Hooper, *An Answer*, sigs. L2^r-^v and L4^r. There are similar comments contained in his *Office of Christ* where he again refers to the 'imperfections and faults' of the doctors of the Church' (ed., Carr, p.28). See also Trueman on Hooper in *Luther's Legacy*, pp.34-5.

of Christ'.²⁶⁴ And he further reinforced this point with quotes where the Fathers admit that Scripture takes precedence, for example: 'Austin says we ought not to have disputations of nay man ...as the canonical Scriptures'.²⁶⁵ Gilby, in his response to Gardiner, was even more pessimistic about their value. He wrote: 'It is no marveile though you can expound your doctors to maynteyne your opinion seinge as you dare to be so bolde to cause Christes wordes to serve for your carnall purpose. I entende not therefore to brynge in any proufe of doctours, but only of the worde of God, leavyng you to your doctours to trye them at leisure' and he was clear that the Fathers could 'erre many tymes in the matters of moste weight and importance', were prone to 'craftilie invented sophismes' and that it was 'impossible to have faith and beleve the doctours. For they are one contrari to another, so that no fayth can be grounded upon them'.²⁶⁶

Ascham's work was notable both for its repeated insistence on the primacy of Scripture over the Fathers and its highly negative attitude towards the Fathers generally. It is evident that he was acutely conscious of the direct bearing recourse to the patristic corpus had on the principle of *sola scriptura* and the issue of their relationship was an uneasy one for him. A striking number of his references to Fathers in the *Apologia* revolved around their status relative to Scripture.²⁶⁷ He was adamant that their authority was subordinate to that of Scripture: 'You trust in the Doctors without scriptural basis? I don't'; and 'When the Doctors have no scriptural basis, they demonstrate nothing'.²⁶⁸ Even in cases where he did use the Fathers for theological corroboration, he very deliberately added that they were in tune with Paul, Christ and the Word of God.²⁶⁹ So exercised was he about the primacy of Scripture that often the main reason for his patristic quotations was for their confirmations of their own inferiority to Scripture. So, for example:

Nicholas of Lyra speaks about Jerome: 'Nor ought anyone be moved if I depart from the writings of Jerome because the words of the saints are not of such great authority that it is permissible to sense the opposite in these matters which have not been (so) determined through holy Scripture';²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴ Becon, *A comparison between the Lord's Supper and the Pope's Mass* (1560) in *Prayers and other pieces of Becon*, ed., Rev. J. Ayre (P.S., Cambridge, 1844), pp.389-390.

²⁶⁵ *A Comparison Supper and Mass*, ed., Ayre, p.391.

²⁶⁶ Gilby, *An Answer*, sigs H5^r, P1^v, II^r and M3^v.

²⁶⁷ This is a view manifested not only in the *Apologia*; in his *Themata*, he referred to Scripture as the 'fountain head' and the Fathers as the 'rivulets' (p.224).

²⁶⁸ *Apologia*, pp.120 and 124.

²⁶⁹ *Apologia*, pp.50, 72 and 73.

²⁷⁰ *Apologia*, p.21.

When the Doctors have no scriptural basis, they demonstrate nothing. When they are destitute of all Scripture, see to what pitch of impudence they break forth. They suborn the Holy Spirit against Christ, or (rather) they condemn the Holy Spirit for negligence because it didn't compose a perfect testament of Christ...²⁷¹; and

But I receive the Fathers, as they themselves order that they be received, that is, if they contain themselves within their own jurisdiction and do not enter into a possession of the Word of God. ... Augustine says 'I am not bound by the authority of this letter because I have a letter of Cyprian which does not accord with the canon, and I consider that to fall outside the canon. And the contents of it which are consistent with the authority of divine Scripture I receive with praise of him, however, those which are not so consistent I reject with his pardon.'²⁷²

The strength of his feeling about the place of the Fathers vis a vis Scripture was such that he twice used the Latin word *respuo* (which literally means 'I spit out') when making it clear how little regard he had for Fathers if they did not concur with Scripture.²⁷³

Ascham's stance on the Fathers was born out of his private certainty about the primacy of Scripture. In adopting it, he appeared to be very much in line with some of the earliest pioneers and most obdurate advocates of the sufficiency of Scripture. Figures like Tyndale had been deeply sceptical about their utilization and did not really see how *ad fontes* could apply much beyond the New Testament.²⁷⁴ Luther too, though Augustine informed his theology, was very negative about the worth of the Fathers *per se*. In part 2 of his *Abroganda*, for example, Luther barked that his opponents in '...using the name of the Fathers, eradicate the Word of God' and that 'there is nothing more dangerous than the works and lives of saints [meaning Fathers] which are not founded on Scriptures', concluding that [saints] at least 'retract their own errors', a clear acknowledgement of their fallibility.²⁷⁵

Men like Ascham, whose confidence in and commitment to Scripture was so secure, were exercising independent judgement about the value of writers as critical as the Church Fathers. Whilst Ascham's message was not at odds with mainstream Protestantism, the emphasis was his own, and it stands as a good illustration of the spectrum of approaches possible within the broader umbrella movement of Protestantism. Ascham's individualism and sometimes

²⁷¹ *Apologia*, p.124.

²⁷² *Apologia*, p.25. As if to underline the point, Ascham actually repeated almost precisely this wording on page 121.

²⁷³ *Apologia*, pp.25 and 121.

²⁷⁴ Greenslade, *Fathers*, p.59.

²⁷⁵ Luther, *Misuse* (Latin), pp.185 and 186.

eccentricity of approach can be further witnessed in another feature of his theology, namely his anticlericalism, which I now move on to review.

Chapter 4: Anticlericalism

Any tract which attacked the Mass, the mainstay of priestly identity and power, was a potent vehicle for anticlericalism. Many Protestant anti-Mass tracts were anticlerical and Ascham's was no exception. However, Ascham's anticlericalism was unusually strong. It was not just that his animosity seemed to go further than was officially condoned, but the balance of his anticlericalism was often uncomfortably out of proportion with the theological points he was making. His own understanding of Scripture's guidance on clerical office went some way to explain his stance, but his anticlericalism ran still deeper and was markedly distinctive in its articulation. Several long-standing personal prejudices, concerns and circumstances underpinned his anticlerical outlook and were reflected in his *Apologia*. These seem to have formed the bedrock of his own sense of Englishness and national identity which were also used as a powerful means to denigrate the clergy. In this chapter, social history meets theology and it becomes clear how important both are in order to have a more rounded understanding of the Reformation.

The historiography of anticlericalism is difficult, not least because it is a category that has essentially been constructed by historians; the term 'anticlericalism' did not actually exist in the sixteenth century (at least in England).¹ It is therefore a challenging task to fit Ascham's *Apologia* within the historiographical framework. There is some scepticism about using the term 'anticlericalism' at all. For Haigh it is just too glib a category; he has dismissed it as a cause of the Reformation and even mooted its redundancy as a meaningful historical category.² This is all very well, but a sustained hostility towards the clergy in Ascham's *Apologia* cannot be ignored and does seem to confirm the validity of anticlericalism as a genuine force in its own right; as Rex eloquently puts it, whilst we should avoid the idea that the word 'anticlericalism' contains some single practice or reality, it is stubbornly indispensable in academic discussion and the best term we have for a range of phenomena.³ Yet we still need a full contextualisation of the phenomenon. Marshall's template for the

¹ Ryrie, *Age of Reformation*, p.26. There is, by contrast, a greater acceptance of the term and its use as a factor of historical change in the German Reformation: see R.W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London, 1987).

² Haigh, *Reformation Revised*, pp.57-58. He was responding in the main to Dickens who had argued that pre-Reformation anticlericalism was a major cause in 'The Shape of Anticlericalism and the English Reformation in Politics and Society' in *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe* eds., E.I. Kouri and T. Scott (London 1986), pp.379-410.

³ R. Rex, 'Jasper Fylooll and Enormities of the Clergy: two tracts written during Reformation Parliament' *S.C.J.*, vol.4 (2000), p.1045.

gradual change in lay perceptions as regards both theory and practice of the Catholic priesthood is helpful and relevant to Ascham's vicious attacks on the sacerdotal priesthood which reduced the role of the priesthood to one of function rather than essence.⁴ We must also appreciate the way in which anticlericalism at a general level may have fused disparate and multiple phenomena, taking on a life of its own in later stages of the Reformation.⁵ A full examination of Ascham's antipathy towards the clergy certainly reveals a layered anticlericalism, which seemed simultaneously to build on older brands of anticlericalism, such as Henry's royal supremacy propaganda and commonwealth concerns, a legally-rooted prejudice against the clergy and a lay resentment about the wealth of the Church, and also to incorporate newer theological grounds for condemning the priesthood.

A full contextualization of anticlericalism must also entail distinguishing, as Scarisbrick did, between different types of anticlericalism. It is vital to clarify, for example, not only the precise target(s) of the abuse but also the ultimate aim of the anticlerical sentiments.⁶ There was a vast difference in nature and effect between, on the one hand, idealistic reformism which retained a healthy respect for a clerical office (for example, Colet for his priests), and on the other, outright anti-sacerdotal disaffection.⁷ Ascham's *Apologia* was very much at the latter end of the spectrum. He dismissed the Catholic priesthood as a product of a defective theology. His anticlericalism even extended to the episcopacy where he considered they were tainted by association. Certainly, as regards the Catholic priesthood, there was on his part no hint of a desire for any sort of rehabilitation or respect for their dignity; his denunciation of it was angry, irreverent and absolute.

Furthermore, we should bear in mind that displays of anticlericalism in no way obviated Protestant clericalism.⁸ Many Protestant reformers were clerics themselves and did not intend that there should be a Church stripped of clerical management or that there be any diminution in the respect people should have for their ministers. Ascham did evince some support for a Protestant ministry (usually referring to it as 'presbytery') whose primary functions were the ministration of the sacraments and the preaching of the Word. Yet some of his criticisms of the clergy did not seem to be limited just to Catholic priests, but rather to

⁴ P. Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford, 1994), pp.1 and 212.

⁵ Dickens, 'The Shape of Anticlericalism', p.379; Ryrie, *Age of Reformation*, pp.26-28.

⁶ J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley, 1968), pp.243-4.

⁷ Marshall, *Priesthood*, p.123

⁸ Marshall, *Priesthood*, chapter 8.

condemn in a more collective way all priests. In his work, expressions of disaffection about priestly ignorance and moral deficiency had the effect of undermining the dignity of the clerical status as a whole. It was clear that anticlericalism could fit the aims of a Protestant agenda for reasons that were not always theologically grounded.⁹ Certainly at points in Ascham's *Apologia*, the balance was very much on the side of functional anticlericalism rather than Protestant theology, the former almost seeming to dictate the latter. Ascham's lack of ordination was also relevant and his anticlericalism all the more compelling for it. In reviews of anticlericalism, historians often run shy of succumbing to an overly neat dichotomy between lay and clergy,¹⁰ but the anticlericalism Ascham voiced seemed very much shaped by his lay status. The influence of a very personal anticlericalism on the theological configuration of Ascham's *Apologia* tallies completely with the historiographical analysis of Ryrie and Marshall who decry the unhealthy set of barriers which exist between religious and social histories.¹¹ Such clarifications are also very important when it comes to a consideration of the extent to which anticlericalism can be counted as a cause of the Reformation: in terms of confessionalisation, Ascham's anticlericalism, bound up as it was within the context of the Eucharist, was undoubtedly more instrumental than purely coincidental.

4.1 The Priesthood

The priesthood was a central and vital part of religious life. At the level of the parish, the priest offered the individual pastoral guidance and spiritual instruction from cradle to grave. At a national level, the priesthood was one of the most important ranks of the Church hierarchy and an important arm of its power. In the context of the Mass, the priest was regarded as a living embodiment of Christ whose actions re-enacted the drama of Christ's passion, a privileged agent of God whose unique status allowed him alone only to touch the body of Christ in the host. He was an essential intermediary between the laity and God, who alone could present the congregation with a sign of God's presence and help secure their salvation.¹² It was only through the priest's agency that the miracle of transubstantiation

⁹ E.H. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003).

¹⁰ Haigh, *Reformation Revised*, p.58; Marshall, *Priesthood*, pp.126 and 141.

¹¹ Ryrie and Marshall, *Beginnings of English Protestantism*, p.11.

¹² Marshall, *Priesthood*, chapter 2, in particular.

could take place.¹³ He was a necessary agent too of the sacraments of baptism, penance, and extreme unction.

It was the very importance of priests that first prompted calls for clerical reform in the century before Ascham's *Apologia*. In particular, Erasmus had upbraided priests in his *Encomium Moriae* of 1509 for their unhealthy avarice and their complicity in the propagation of superstitious practices.¹⁴ In 1512 Colet observed in his Convocation Sermon that 'priestes [were] nat lyvyng priestly but secularly to the utter and miserable distruction of the churche'.¹⁵ The intentions of both these men were, however, constructive not destructive, and part of a collective endeavour to revitalise the existing clerical estate for the good of the Church.¹⁶ This rhetoric of transformation was not irrelevant though to more destructive tendencies; it helped to legitimise the rather more belligerent attacks on the priesthood by the next generation of reformers who were now driven by a different theological imperative. Men like Luther and, in England, Tyndale and Barnes, now launched a devastating challenge on the priesthood whose current role they did not consider was supported by Scripture.¹⁷ Although Henry VIII did not necessarily share their theological views, he capitalised on and encouraged anticlerical sentiment because it dovetailed with his policies on the break with Rome and promotion of the royal supremacy. The anticlerical impetus continued with the 1529 English Parliament's attempts to curb the economic and political power of the Church, and infringements on clerical privilege were enshrined in law.¹⁸

As the campaign for reforming the Mass gained momentum in the 1540s, the priestly office came under renewed fire. The Mass was central to the priestly function in terms of social status and religious function.¹⁹ To put it another way, the Mass explained the necessity for having a priesthood at all. There were clear signs that the priesthood, particularly concerning

¹³ S. Doran, *Princes, Pastors and People: the Church and religion in England, 1500-1700* (London, 2002), p.9; Marshall, *Priesthood*, p.40.

¹⁴ Erasmus, *Encomium Moriae*, trans. B. Radice (Penguin, 1993), p.130.

¹⁵ Colet, *Convocation Sermon* (London, 1530), sig.B4r.

¹⁶ C. Harper-Bill's 'Colet's Convocation Sermon' in Marshall, ed., *Impact Reformation*, p. 18; Marshall, *Priesthood*, p. 214.

¹⁷ One of Luther's most savage attacks on the priesthood was his *Abroganda* (discussed in chapter 3); Tyndale shocked many with his *Practice of Prelates* of 1530; obvious manifestations of Barnes's anticlericalism were his Cambridge anticlerical sermon (1525) and his *A Supplicatyon...unto the most excellent and redouted prince kinge henrye the eyght* (1531 and 1534).

¹⁸ The first such legislation was debated and effected in the Reformation Parliament of 1529 which was responsible for passing many Acts of Parliament which eroded the power of the Church (Lehmberg, *Reformation Parliament*, chapter 5).

¹⁹ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.36.

its role in the Mass, was seriously in jeopardy. Richard Smith's defence of the priesthood in his work on the Mass was a clear reaction to this development: he explained that he wrote his work '...[so] that thereby men maye see that the masse is not set up of late by the covetousnes of preistes as some say falsely it is'.²⁰ References to priests proliferated in this work and Smith was consistently adamant about the important theological basis for the priest in the sacrament. He stressed, for example, that the sacrifice was the priest's 'chief and principal office as it appeareth in St Paules Epistle to the Hebrews'.²¹ He was also careful to elevate their standing. He described how 'an oblation or sacrifice is continuallye offered by goddes mynisters the preists' and distinguished priestes from laymen in similar terms: 'It is not the office of a prieste to brynge forth breaded and wynethe office of a prieste...is chiefly to offre sacrifices for the synnes of the people'.²²

The men who formed Edward VI's government, although they differed from Smith in theological terms, were not so dissimilar in the caution they shared about public attitudes towards the priesthood. Running alongside policies to reform the priesthood and to some extent state-sponsored anticlericalism was official concern about public disorder. Such worries had first been voiced in 1545 by Henry, who, furious about the open contempt displayed by members of the laity towards the bishops and priests and the taunting of their ignorance, made a speech against it at the dissolution of his Parliament.²³ Very early on in the new reign of Edward, Royal Injunctions noted the high levels of uncharitable abuse being directed at priests; these were immediately bolstered by visitation articles of 1548 demanding to know the perpetrators of such abuse.²⁴ Consequently under Edward official action concerning the priestly role was carefully circumscribed and controlled so as not to constitute a trigger for outbursts. In the 1549 Book of Common Prayer in the section on the Eucharist, there was no apparent erosion of the centrality and responsibility of the priest in the communion service. Rubric such as '...[the priest] turning to the Altar without any elevacion or shewing the Sacrament to the people' was presented as merely an alteration of practice rather than a diminution of authority or even existence.²⁵ Cranmer's *Defence*, whilst being theologically far-reaching, was relatively measured in its treatment of the actual office of priesthood. Aside from chastising them in a general way for 'extoll[ing] themselves above

²⁰ Smith, *A Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, fol.i^v.

²¹ *A Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, fols.xix^v-xx^r.

²² *A Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, fols.xxxir and xxiii^{r-v}.

²³ Strype, *Cranmer*, vol.1, p.197.

²⁴ Marshall, *Priesthood*, p.228.

²⁵ For the text of 1549 Prayer Book, see Cummings, *Book Common Prayer*.

God and ... above the throne of God', it was clear that Cranmer's unhappiness with priests was confined to their participation in flawed doctrinal practice.²⁶ In parallel with his argument that priests had no business in acts of elevation or adoration was, in fact, a very clear warning about the continued standing of the priesthood:

And this nothing diminisheth the estimation and dignity of priesthood and other ministers of the Church, but advanceth and highly commandeth their ministration. For if they are much to be loved, honoured and esteemed, that be the King's chancellors, judges, officers and ministers in temporal matters, how much then are they to be esteemed that be ministers of Christ's words and sacraments and have to them committed the keys of heaven, to let in and shut out, by the ministration of his word and gospel!²⁷

Taken in the round, Cranmer's negative depiction of the Mass clergy in his *Defence* contained, as MacCulloch observes, 'no real ire'.²⁸ This was also true of other Edwardine tracts published with the official seal *cum privilegio* which contained little in the way of superfluous attacks on the priesthood. Many of them, of course, were written by priests.

Ascham's *Apologia* evinced no trace of the decorum being promoted by those in power. He was openly vituperative and made it clear that his rejection of the Mass was going involve a substantial assault on the priesthood. His contempt for the dominance of the Mass was mirrored by and intertwined with an explicit scorn for the dominance of priests:

Indeed they can learn no other because the crowd of priests are able to teach no other religion than the Mass. If the Mass, if the Mass alone is not to be that religion which English men only strive for, why are priests who can profess no other religion than the Mass endured? Priests alone offer a religion to the people, but they are engaged in no other aspect of religion than the Mass. And so almost no other form of religion remains in England than the Mass.²⁹

In his account he presented distinct components of the Mass as inextricably bound up with the priesthood who administered them. For example, he regularly used phrase *sacerdotium sacrificorum* ('a priesthood of sacrificers') and further yoked the priesthood and the sacrifice with the chiasmus *sacrificium sacerdotale*, *sacerdotium sacrificabile* ('the priestly sacrifice, the sacrificing priesthood'). Another frequent refrain, *sacerdotium externum* ('the external or foreign priesthood'), associated priests with outward, unscriptural affectations and exterior

²⁶ Cranmer, *Defence*, p.288; MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.461.

²⁷ Cranmer, *Defence*, p.456.

²⁸ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p.461.

²⁹ *Apologia*, p.61.

works as opposed to interior faith.³⁰ In fact, the majority of Ascham's work was devoted to a systematic demolition of the Catholic priesthood, one which not only challenged its performative function in the Mass ceremony but seriously undermined its standing and, at points, its very existence. His approach had appreciably more in common with some of the hotter Protestant reformers (especially those who did not publish with the official seal), many of whom had passed through Cambridge University.

A common mode of attack on the priest's role in the Mass among hardline Protestants was the accusation of priestly magic, the presentation of the Mass as a conjuring act, and the priest as conjurer.³¹ It was a particularly potent form of criticism: the miracle of the Mass enacted by the priest continued to act very much as an inspiration to faith, and so such criticisms, if believed, had enormous potential for causing real resentment among congregations against their priests.³² Bale, a man often held responsible for the 'harshest of anticlerical verdicts', was adamant that the Mass 'serveth all witches in their witchery, all sorcerers, charmers, enchanterers, dreamers, soothsayers...devil-raisers, miracle-doers...for without a mass they cannot well work their feats'.³³ Gilby made a similar point in his anti-Mass tract, addressing the priest directly and saying '... your [ie the priest's] transsubstanciacion is mucche after the arte of magike'.³⁴ Calvin, in a tract translated into English and put into circulation in 1548, also accused priests of magic tricks: 'Theyr consecration differeth nothing from a kynde of enchauntment. For after the maner of an enchaunter, they thynke that wyth whysperynge and divers gestures they brynge Christe out of heaven into theyr handes'.³⁵ Ascham made similar charges in his work. In fact, a major theme of his *Apologia*, one that framed the entire tract and featuring both in the long title of the work and the rest of the narrative, was *praestigiae* (which I have translated as 'magic', but also denotes 'deceptions', 'illusions' or 'jugglers' tricks').³⁶ He applied it in a highly polemical and targeted way against priests such that it essentially rendered the miracle

³⁰ The adjective *externus* also has connotations of 'foreign', thereby reinforcing the sense of xenophobia which I discuss below.

³¹ Cameron, *Enchanted Europe*, pp.209-210; he also refers to a growing Protestant demonology of Roman Catholicism and the rhetoric of superstition (p.173); G.K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2003), p.2. There was also a common evangelical tradition of accusing popes of magic: H.L. Parish, *Monks, miracles and magic: Reformation representations of the medieval church* (London, 2005), pp.128ff.

³² Parish, *Monks, Miracles and Magic*, p.67.

³³ Dickens, 'The Shape of Anticlericalism', p.391; Bale, *Lattre Examinacyon* (ed. Christmas), p.236.

³⁴ *An Answer*, sig.E4v.

³⁵ *A faythfull and moost godlye treatyse concernynge the most sacred Sacrament of the blessed body and bloude of our sauioure Chryst, co[m]piled by Iohn Caluyne*, (London, 1548) (STC 4411), sig.D6^r.

³⁶ The full title of his tract was *In Defence of the Lord's Supper and against the Mass and its Magic*.

enacted by the priest in the Mass an act of magic which did nothing more than dupe the faithful: 'And then with the ministry of the Word and the sacraments scorned which Paul bestows, they leap over to the priesthood where they celebrate the Mass; that is, in the place of the preaching of the Gospel, in place of the dispensation of the sacraments, they keep the people in ignorance and false religion with their worthless magic'.³⁷

Another especially hard-hitting device, which simultaneously served to highlight the fallacy of the priesthood in the Eucharist and discredit the priest, was inversion. It often entailed taking the recognized duty of the priest in the Mass as the *alter Christus* and turning it on its head through a direct appeal to Christ. It was one utilized in a methodical way by Ascham. He began by marshalling a detailed summary of Christ's actions at the Last Supper, including his offer of the bread and wine to all present: 'Christ sitting with his disciples with such great humility, with such great simplicity, delivering an open and plain speech, breaking the bread (and) dividing it up between individuals and offering a drinking-cup to each person, and directing that they also act thus'.³⁸ He then placed this in direct antithesis to the self-indulgent and grasping behavior of a priest performing the Mass ceremony:

...in the opposite direction, a native priest rushing forth alone from chapel to altar and standing there alone with his back to the people, with his actor's garb and farcical movements, gross zeal and wicked profanations, mumbling I don't know what to himself and giving to himself, apportioning to himself in utmost privacy and ever so secretly doing everything for his own benefit and devouring everything for himself alone.³⁹

The binary opposition of Christ and the priests was one that a growing Protestant movement would frequently draw on.⁴⁰ Guest drew a sharp distinction between the two: 'For howe can it possible be that Christes bodye whyche cannot be made holyer and perfecter than already it is, shuld or might be consecrate of the priest?... Ther is no man be he never so moch priested ... yet can make the feeblest basest and unperfytest creature in thys worlde, moch lesse christes body'.⁴¹ A technique very similar to that of Ascham was used by the reformer Becon. In the part of his 1550 treatise, *Jewel of Joye*, which dealt with the Mass, he too juxtaposed descriptions of Christ and priests in order to directly expose, in as stark a way as possible, the errors of the Mass clergy:

³⁷ *Apologia*, p.117.

³⁸ *Apologia*, pp.27-28.

³⁹ *Apologia*, p.28.

⁴⁰ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.21.

⁴¹ Guest, *A treatise againste the preuee masse*, sigs.A8^r and B1^r.

Christe was pricked to the braynes with a crowne of thorne, they have a balde patch upon their heades instead of crownes, & some have on their cappes & miters for catching cold. Christ was stript naked...they be clad in sylke, saten, damaske, velvet and cloth of golde...Christ was nayled unto the crosse....⁴²

and so it continued for many more pages.

The theme of inversion was taken to its logical extreme by Bale. He made famous the dichotomy paradigm, the division of the world and more specifically the Church, into ‘true’ and ‘false’.⁴³ His polarizing narrative was effectively channelled into his treatment of the priesthood as captured in the full title of his 1550 work: *The apology of Iohan Bale agaynste a ranke papyst anuswering both hym and hys doctours, that neyther their vowes nor yet their priesthode are of the Gospell, but of Antichrist*. It was also an important feature of the Eucharistic work of 1546-7 that he edited, the *Examinacyons of Anne Askewe*. In this work, priests were consistently associated with the ‘wrong’ side, the side of the devil, and the reverse of Christianity and Scripture: ‘Those priests whom he here defendeth are...members of the devil’;⁴⁴ and ‘No Christian erudition bringeth this priest, nor yet the good counsels of Scripture’.⁴⁵ The opposition of true and false was similarly applied to priests ‘...so do these false anointed ...priests now attribute them again unto their private public masses, the pope’s own wares...’; and ‘lying curates by whom the truth is blasphemed’.⁴⁶ The device of binary opposition was also a prominent feature of Ascham’s treatment of priests in the *Apologia*. Like Askew’s *Examynacyons*, he repeatedly incorporated priests within a sharply divided universe which pitted Christ against the Devil, true against false. One particularly direct contrast ran as follows: ‘Therefore, let those Roman sacrificers [ie priests] either admit that the name and Word of the Lord have been set forth in the Mass unprofitably for the people by those men, or let them respond to Christ who teaches that every word not understood has been seized by the Devil...’.⁴⁷ Rhetorical antithesis no doubt played as important a part as the Revelation of St John in creating this sense of dualism, but the impact was the same.⁴⁸

⁴² *Jewel of Joye*, sigs.O1^v-O2^r.

⁴³ Historians identify Bale as one of the chief architects of the notion of dualism that insinuated itself into the Protestant psyche by the 1540s, usually with reference to his *Image of Both Churches*, for example, P. Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII’s England* (Aldershot, 2006), pp.9 and 15; and Ryrle, *Gospel and Henry VIII*, p.180. It was a view of religion which permeated Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* (ODNB, Bale).

⁴⁴ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, p.168.

⁴⁵ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, p.158.

⁴⁶ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed., Christmas, pp.171 and 150.

⁴⁷ *Apologia*, pp.116-7.

⁴⁸ In his *The Image of Bothe Churches* (London, 1548) which essentially comprised a meticulous commentary of John’s revelation, Bale wrote that ‘all belief is summed up in this John’s Gospel’.

The priestly caste was depicted as profoundly unchristian and therefore totally unfit as facilitators of divine salvation.

A key component of Bale's dualism which was likewise deployed in the *Apologia* was the device of interrogation. In Bale's tract, on the one side was Anne Askew who stood steadfastly by the wording of Scripture, and on the other was her inquisitor, the priest. The structure served to embed the polarities to an even greater extent: 'A priest was sent for to examine Anne and he asked what she said to the sacrament of the altar. She would not respond because she perceived him a papist'.⁴⁹ This was utilized with perhaps even greater force in Ascham's *Apologia* who, at points, structured his work as though he were interrogating a priest, for example: 'Priest, whoever you are, show me where that private sacrifice is beyond the role of ministering to others which you lay sole claim to'; and

For give me a most learned priest to prove whether he dares to commit the reason for the external priesthood to the judgement of the word of God....Speak, why do you stand alone at the altar, not dispensing to others? Speak of the Scripture on whose authority you are a sacrificer for the living and the dead. Speak of the Scripture where an eating is a sacrifice of the minister rather than of the other man.⁵⁰

The effect of the interrogation in both Bale and Ascham was not only to reinforce the sense of a divided universe of right and wrong, but to highlight the total lack of authority the priest had within the Eucharistic remit.

Another mode of attack used by Protestants to expose the errors of the priesthood was the classical technique of satire. It was a *modus operandi* with which University-trained men, in particular, were very familiar. The trope of the ship of fools as a means to criticise the Church and its personnel was an old one, used originally in the fifteenth century by Brandt, a Strasbourg humanist and theologian, in a work disseminated across Europe and translated into many languages.⁵¹ Erasmian satire, particularly the *Encomium Moriae*, featured regularly in Cambridge book inventories.⁵² Satire was a popular classical genre enshrined in writers such as Aristophanes and Lucian, two authors who were prominent in Cambridge reading lists, the former being highly recommended by Erasmus as a model for good Greek

⁴⁹ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, p.151.

⁵⁰ *Apologia*, pp.78 and 112-3.

⁵¹ Brandt, *Das Narrenschiff / Stultifera Navis* ('Ship of Fools') of 1494, trans. W.Gillis (London, 1971); the Latin word *navis* for ship punned the *navis* ('nave') of the Church.

⁵² Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories* reveals that Erasmus's *Encomium Moriae* was one of the most popularly owned works of Erasmus which in general dominated inventories.

prose style.⁵³ Theatrical performances of comedies, which constituted an important facet of instruction at the University, provided another example of the potency of laughter to make a point.⁵⁴ Satire which concentrated specifically on the clergy was also not new; ranks of the clergy had been lampooned in Chaucer, and the Pope in the satirical *Julius Exclusus* of 1514. However, at this stage in the Reformation mockery of the priests, which was now also rooted in a theological challenge to their legitimacy and to some degree served the purposes of the Crown's agenda, was so much more pernicious.

In his *Apologia*, Ascham was self-consciously operating within this tradition of satire. His work opened with an extended description of the ship of Christ which had been hijacked by the Devil:

The Devil has arranged every ambush and given over all his strength and his whole self for the purpose of wrecking the ship of Christ. To which end, the Devil employs a suitable ship's captain, efficient oarsmen, well-prepared sailors, remarkable skill, ready orders: the Pope being the ship's captain, the Bishops assuming the role of oarsmen, the sacrificing priests as sailors, the skill being human doctrine, and the orders, supererogatory good works...Sacrificers exert themselves with sails and oars and, with the Word of God shut up again, human doctrine, almost alone, climbs the masts, it runs through the ship's gangways, it keeps sway over the prow and the stern, and fastens the anchor...⁵⁵

Unlike Brandt who was conservative in his religious sympathies, Ascham used the image not as a corrective, but as a means to seriously call into question the status of the Mass and its agents.

This seriousness of purpose was similarly reflected later in the work when he lambasted with no restraint at all one of the most sacred stages in the Mass ceremony, namely the priest's touching of 'Christ's body' and the elevation of the host. With the utmost scorn, he wrote: '...the priest elevates above his head a naked "little boy"⁵⁶ by his ankles and the tips of his feet and, as though the little boy were dancing on the priest's fingers and walking on the air and, suspended there, stretches his suppliant hands to the Father sitting loftily in heaven'.⁵⁷ Ascham's use of the Greek word *ἀεροβατών* (aerobatōn), meaning 'walking on the air', a

⁵³ As advised in Erasmus's *De Ratione Studii* ('On the Right Method of Study') of 1511.

⁵⁴ J. Walker and P.D. Streufert, *Early Modern Academic Drama* (Aldershot, 2008), p.31.

⁵⁵ *Apologia*, pp.2-3.

⁵⁶ For those who believed in transubstantiation, the wafer of bread was, in the miracle of the Mass, transformed into both a child and a man. More specifically, Ascham may well have had in mind here the depictions of the child-in-the-Host in the Mass of St Gregory which were in some part a response to those who denied the real presence. Ascham's reference to the little boy may even have hinted at priestly pederasty.

⁵⁷ *Apologia*, pp.35-36.

word used by both Aristophanes and Lucian, was deliberately retained in Greek type, as though perhaps to credit the ancient satirists for their assistance in his disclosure of the folly of the climax of the Mass.⁵⁸

Satirical devices appeared with singular regularity in Eucharistic tracts composed by University men. Extravagance of sacerdotal dress was a regular source of humour and effective means to highlight the folly of the priest's role.⁵⁹ Turner reprehended the trappings of priests by listing them exhaustively, for example: 'shaven crones, priestes gounes, albes stoles and vestimentes...'.⁶⁰ Becon also mocked the outfit of the massmonger 'dressed with scenical and game-player's outfit' and painstakingly listed the various lavish accoutrements.⁶¹ Ascham too used priestly trappings as a basis for mockery. In a flourish of sarcasm, he wrote: 'A shaving of heads is a means to lay aside temporality, the white colour of clothes, the light of the Word of God, clothes reaching the ankles, the innocence of life'.⁶² The ridiculing of priests for their ostentatious apparel was not simply a means to entertain. It contained a serious message that traditional marks of external distinction were pointless because there was no essential difference between priest and layman. It also highlighted their deceit in its suggestion that rich trappings concealed the corruption beneath.

Staying with the theme of costume, there was also a tendency among Protestant reformers to focus their satire on the theatrical nature of the Mass, an observation that seriously undermined the priestly claim to be the august intermediary between God and man.⁶³ Gilby picked up on this, running through the outward actions of the priests in the Mass as though they were stage directions: 'mumblinge ... with breathing and blowering' and asking: 'Nowe may we marke...whether we may styl cal your dignified priesthode (which standeth in shavings...garmentes, gestures, bekinges, blowynges, crossynges, kyssynges and the farthynges whereof the whole heape ariseth) the true priesthode, or rather judge all these

⁵⁸ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 225; Lucian, *Philopatris*, 12. A similar parody of priests appeared in Ascham's *Toxophilus* of 1545: in a comical tableau in which he derided inept shooters, he mocked priestly benedictions, describing the shooter turning about and blessing the field (G:vol.2, p.141).

⁵⁹ Marshall, *Priesthood*, pp.133-137. This will undoubtedly have been fuelled in part by a Henrician Act of Parliament which sought to regulate the apparel that priests could wear, forbidding lower clergy from donning various types of furs and silks (24 Henry VIII c.13).

⁶⁰ *Newe Dialogue*, sigs.B8^v-C1^r.

⁶¹ Becon, *Comparison Supper and Mass*, ed., Ayre, pp.360-3.

⁶² *Apologia*, pp.107.

⁶³ Marshall, *Priesthood*, p.35. Marshall comments that this was feature of the work of particularly Bale, Becon and Turner.

things to be nothyng and therefore your priesthode to be counterfaite'.⁶⁴ Farce and theatrics were also prominent motifs in Ascham's *Apologia*. One jibe went as follows:

Come, what do you think, Sacrificer, when you turn yourself around so many times towards the altar and say 'the Lord with you' when often no one is there and very often no one understands. Perhaps you are speaking to walls? Or to your images? Hear something which is worthy of even greater mockery: he shouts 'Go, it has been sent' when there is no one who leaves. If this is not pure stupidity, what do you say is? You stand at the table of the Lord; what if you were to sit alone at your own private table at home and fling yourself hither and thither and were to address men when none are present and order men to go away before they come, would you not be mad?⁶⁵

Satire was a destabilising weapon with a moral message and a power to reform. Goldhill comments on how the Latin word *ludere*, meaning 'to play', was a watchword for those who subscribed to this method of 'jesting out the truth'.⁶⁶ Ascham would in fact use the verb *ludere* (in compound form) repeatedly in his *Apologia*, most strikingly during one of his satirical vignettes of a game of hide and seek with Papist doctrine which opened as follows: 'The papists act in the same way that young boys are accustomed to play together' (*colludere*).⁶⁷ Ascham's and others' use of satire was more than stylistic affectation and a goad to improvement. Their mockery served to expose the travesty of committing one's hopes of salvation to the priestly caste. Its aggressive components served a heuristic function, shocking its readers into revising their perceptions.

In terms of the range of devices used for undermining the priesthood's role in the sacrament Ascham was not alone. What marked him out was the extent to which he attacked the priesthood. He seized every opportunity he could to cast aspersions, each time lingering in his abuse and taking it even further than the most staunch critics of the clergy. Often his anticlerical remarks were totally gratuitous and were conspicuously superfluous to his theological arguments. An obvious example of this was in respect of the sacrifice of the Mass which Ascham characterised as murder by priests. Others had used the metaphor – Turner concluded that 'it foloweth also that ye and your chaplains are bloodi sacrificers', Guest alluded to murder of souls in his Mass tract, and Bale in his preface to Lambert's work on the Lord's Supper (reprinted in 1548) described, in a string of insults, priests as 'spyghtfull murtherers...for all their counterfeit colours of holynesse, prelacy [and]

⁶⁴ *An Answer*, sigs.D2^r and Ee1^r. 'Farthynges' should probably be read as 'fartings'.

⁶⁵ *Apologia*, pp.58-59.

⁶⁶ Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek?*, p. 48.

⁶⁷ *Apologia*, p.114. For the verb *ludo* (often in compound form), see also pp.66, 108, 115, 116 and 117.

prestehode...'.⁶⁸ But Ascham differed from them in emphasis and exaggerated beyond measure the image of a murderous clergy. Under the subheading 'Thou shalt not kill', he stressed:

Truly priests make this boast, namely that they offer Christ to the Father...except that ...that whole matter is full of slaughter and bloodshed. For even though they are not able to kill Christ, however, in defending this propitiatory sacrifice of theirs which they institute for the remission of sins, they are not able to get away from the desire of killing because (as Paul says) there may come no Remission without the shedding of blood.⁶⁹

His use of rhetoric here further buttressed the sacerdotal sadism, incorporating the emotive word *cruoris* which in Latin has specific connotations of blood being shed by wounding, and he deliberately placed the word *sanguinis* ('blood') for emphasis at the end of the sentence. The murderous motives of priests was a theme to which he returned later in the tract. He reminded the reader that 'priests in the New Testament killed Christ', claiming that 'the very reason they [priests] want to be called sacrificers, for that same reason they should not refuse to be called murderers'.⁷⁰ He even made the extraordinary assertion that 'Our priests don't want it to be a sacrifice in the way that Paul meant, but rather are sacrificers in the way of Nero' in a way that was calculated to conjure up Nero's notorious public sacrifices of Christians.⁷¹

Ascham, like many Protestants, believed in the priesthood of all believers, but rather than develop the doctrine in a positive way, he instead used it as an opportunity to draw out the themes of priestly greed and exclusivity at the expense of the Christian faithful. These themes he returned to in the tract, time and time again: 'Who is there of all the priests of our time (and I speak about the most holy) who has waited for another, even if there have been many priests all together in the same Church?', 'Is the Greek [word] *thusia* that sacrifice which our priests are desirous to have dominion over alone separate from other men?', 'If all people are spiritual priests in accordance with Scripture, why do they [priests] not count themselves among all people, but separate themselves from the rest and call themselves the only external priests, contrary to all Scripture?' and 'Our priests...even condemn Paul while they yoke the priesthood to the ministry and they defraud all Christians, whilst that which

⁶⁸ Turner, *A Newe dialogue*, sig.G4^v; Guest, *A treatise againste the preuee masse*, sig.A2^f; Bale's preface to Lambert's *A treatyse ...concernyng hys opynyon in the sacrame[n]t of the aultre* (fols.i-ii).

⁶⁹ *Apologia*, p.74.

⁷⁰ *Apologia*, pp.102 and 138.

⁷¹ *Apologia*, p.99.

everyone is those men alone wish to be called'.⁷² Ascham, to a degree not always apparent in other tracts, was prioritizing an attack on priests over theology.

A further manifestation of this was Ascham's tendency to cast priests as wholly responsible for the flaws and abuses of the Mass and explicitly blame them for the errors in doctrine that had arisen in the Church. Priests, Ascham claimed, had been actively transgressive: 'Who from our priests has ever obeyed Paul and fallen silent? Certainly, either Paul ordered this with no authority or our priests with the utmost impudence don't obey'.⁷³ As far as Ascham viewed the matter, this was particularly the case in the Eucharist and he insisted that 'Priests not only celebrate it otherwise, but perversely defend this act of theirs which daily usage sets the seal of approval on'.⁷⁴ He maintained that 'they [priests] scorn the ministry which Paul hands down and they take up the priesthood which Paul scorns' and he appealed to his audience, 'Understand, reader whoever you are, how our priests confuse, completely confuse all of God's commandments so that they can establish this private sacrifice of theirs contrary to every commandment'.⁷⁵ Doctrinal aberration was, as far as Ascham was concerned, the product of sacerdotal conspiracy. In respect of the adoration for example, Ascham noted that: 'the wickedness of the priests feeds rather than removes this error of the people'.⁷⁶ The same was true of the priesthood:

Our priests are utterly shameless. For Scripture never addresses them and never entrusts the priesthood to them; but those men who have not themselves been summoned have forced their own selves into the new honour of priesthood...Our priests occupy no Scripture, but with the ministry of Paul slighted and Christ's example spurned, they glorify their own selves to become priests. They do not have the command of the Lord whom they should obey, but, as Paul clearly says, they construct their own universal priesthood in accordance with man.⁷⁷

In short, Ascham was clear that it was less abstract Catholic theology that was at fault here than priests themselves who had brought it about that religion had been completely ruined. He added a final sting: 'This priestly rank has removed nearly the whole of Christ's religion. For it bestows almost no doctrine, does not dispense the sacraments faithfully, carefully celebrates the Mass instead of preaching of the Gospel and sacrifices alone instead of a public dispensation of the sacraments. ...Behold the religion of the Church which the priestly order

⁷² *Apologia*, pp. 82, 90 and 110 and 103.

⁷³ *Apologia*, p.57.

⁷⁴ *Apologia*, p.72.

⁷⁵ *Apologia*, pp.103 and 81.

⁷⁶ *Apologia*, p.50.

⁷⁷ *Apologia*, p.112.

builds'.⁷⁸

There is one other example of Ascham's obsessive focus on the priesthood. As part of his review of the Biblical and apostolic origins of the priesthood, Ascham, like a number of other ambitious reformers, claimed that the name of 'priest' was no longer tenable, following Scripture in preferring the term 'presbyter' or 'minister'. Tyndale had been one of the forerunners of this, arguing that the Greek *presbuteroi* must be translated as 'elders' rather than 'priests'.⁷⁹ As significant a theological argument as this was, Ascham did not let this lie. Unremitting in his determination to undermine the priesthood, Ascham also took the relatively unconventional step of setting out a full philological rejection of the term 'priest'. Over five pages, he examined the term and its cognate forms according to the original Greek wording of Scripture.⁸⁰ His central aim was to highlight the disjuncture between name and function and he dwelt in particular on the incompatibility of the 'priesthood' and the function of 'ministering': 'Does the Scripture of Christ call them "priests" or "those ministering"...Where are the "ministers of the word" also called "priests of the sacraments"? How can it be that Paul, who discusses the ministry so many times, never makes any mention of the priesthood?...Certainly Paul omits the priesthood from his divine counsel'.⁸¹ More than any other contemporary tract, Ascham's *Apologia* showed, through direct recourse to the parameters set by Scripture itself, the total invalidity of the term 'priest'. In a bitter but forceful conclusion, he referred to the *odiosum nomen sacerdotii*, 'the hateful name of the priesthood'.⁸²

In his *Apologia*, Ascham's antisacerdotalism was out of proportion with the theological case he was mounting. His attacks on the Catholic priesthood were sweeping and damning. They culminated at points in wholesale denunciations of the priestly class en masse. His use of the phrase 'a race of priests' when denouncing clerical morals ('They impute licence of the flesh to others, when a race of priests are abandoned to leisure, wanton lust, gorging and intoxication beyond moderation') was broad-brushed and seemed to implicate all priests.

⁷⁸ *Apologia*, p.116.

⁷⁹ For a more detailed examination of Tyndale's translation of this and other Greek terms, see Daniell, *Tyndale*, p.122.

⁸⁰ *Apologia*, pp.100-104. The Greek terms are set out on page 100: *hierourgein* ('to perform sacred rites'), *hiera ergazesthai* ('to make offerings'), *hierateuein* ('to be a priest'), *hierateia* ('the priesthood'), *hierōsunē* ('priestly office'), *hierateuma* ('body of priests') and *hiereus* ('a priest').

⁸¹ *Apologia*, p.101.

⁸² *Apologia*, p.102.

References to priestly notoriety (such as ‘how infamous they [priests] are for their vileness and ignorance, they don’t trouble themselves about to any great degree’) sounded distinctly generic.⁸³ Someone reading his work could not help but conclude that Ascham harboured rather deeper reservations about the clerical estate in and of itself.

4.2 Bishops

Reform of the Mass naturally prompted a reconsideration of the priesthood, but the grounds for challenges to the episcopacy were less obvious and more provocative.⁸⁴ A number of more militant Protestant reformers, including Ascham, did target bishops in their swipes at the Mass. They were not, as they were with the priesthood, calling into question the office of bishop *per se* – there was strong Biblical support for the office – but rather the association bishops had with the Catholic priesthood and the Mass. Their attacks nonetheless worked to undercut the episcopal status.

The main charge made against the episcopacy by these Protestant reformers was their agency in allowing the aberration of the Mass to continue. Hooper made it clear in his work on the Eucharist that he held bishops responsible for the errors of the Mass, observing that ‘... wher as god nether the scripture never ment souch Idolatrye, it [the Mass] is a ceremony instituted by more byshopes then twentye to the great iniury of godes word’.⁸⁵ He decried ‘those vile ceremonies that byshopes hathe browght into the churche’ and claimed that ‘Those that redithe the histories and wrytinges of our elders, knoweth what byshopes of late dayes made this Mass’.⁸⁶ Ultimately, the problem was bishops’ lack of conformity to Scriptural guidance, a point taken up by Bale who reserved some of his most splenetic anticlericalism for bishops and wrote ‘I marvel that Bishops cannot see this in themselves, that they are also no followers of scriptures but peradventure they never read them, but as they find them by chance in their popish portfoliums and masking books, or else they think all the scriptures fulfilled when they have said their matins and their masses’.⁸⁷ Some also used the Eucharist as a springboard to make rather more general demands of the episcopacy, to the extent that they

⁸³ *Apologia*, pp.119 and 108.

⁸⁴ There was a further clerical office that Ascham would also dismiss in his *Apologia*, one that in fact had earlier been endorsed by Tyndale, that of ‘deacon’. Ascham dealt with this office in a perfunctory way, describing it at one point as ‘an office which now counts for nothing in the Church, unless as some joke of God, all apeing and histrionics’ (*Apologia*, p.115).

⁸⁵ Hooper, *Answer*, sig.M1^v.

⁸⁶ Hooper, *Answer*, sigs.M3^v and V3^v.

⁸⁷ Bale, *First Examinacyon*, ed. Christmas, pp.174-175.

even seemed to re-define the job-description. Hooper in his *Answer* delimited a bishop's duties to the obedience of Scripture: 'There is no more requirid of the byshope but that he be diligent and faythfull in the execution of godes worde. It is not requirid that he shuld make any law for the people' adding later that '...the moost inferiour person...is bound to know what god and the sacramentes be and the difference between the one and the other as well as the best byshope of the church'.⁸⁸ Gilby, with even greater force, wrote in his *Answer* 'You, o bishops,...neither have any of you authoritie either to make lawes or interpret the scriptures...you have none authoritie, I saye, over the flocke, further than you have the worde of God for you'.⁸⁹

Ascham also used his work on the Mass to warn against a dereliction of episcopal duty: 'The oldest canons of the Apostles written in Greek, brought forth by St Clement, order all the Bishops of the Church to remain within the bounds of the Word of God; but, if they do not, they predict that many controversies will disrupt the harmony of the Church...'.⁹⁰ He blamed bishops for failing to properly institute the presbytery, a rank which 'through whose [ie. bishops'] fault, an easy avenue to so great a distinction lies open to the most unworthy men'.⁹¹ He too grappled with the basic function of a bishop, using the original Greek to highlight its essential meaning. He observed how the Greek for 'bishop' was *episkopos* which literally meant 'overseer'.⁹² He then used this fundamental meaning as a reason to blame them for failing to properly oversee the correct administration of the sacrament:

If this term 'bishop' (or *episkopos*) had remained as diligently in its former sense of watchfulness as it successfully attained the greatest honour in the Republic, certainly the Mass would not have so stealthily done away with the Lord's Supper or the communal sacrifice of the people from the house of God.⁹³

Another interesting and noteworthy facet of Ascham's discussion of the term *episkopos* was his use of classical Greek literature and myth as authoritative in the determination of a bishop's role: 'the Ancient Greeks used to apply this name to whichever matter for which watchmen and guards were set in place. Moreover, nocturnal spies who survey the camp of the enemy are classified by Homer as *episkopoi* [*Iliad* 10]. For the same reason, Euripides [in

⁸⁸ Hooper, *Answer*, sigs.G2^v and S2^v.

⁸⁹ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.Cc4^v.

⁹⁰ *Apologia*, p.118.

⁹¹ *Apologia*, p.96.

⁹² *Apologia*, p.98.

⁹³ *Apologia*, p.98.

Phoenissae] calls the snake of Mars, the guardian of the Theban springs, an *episkopos*'.⁹⁴

The effect of this was that Ascham did not simply pare the episcopal function down to one of supervision, but through his classical references equated a bishop with an ordinary guardsman, lowly spy, and even a snake. The fact that Ascham so frequently associated the bishopric with the sacrificing priests also worked to diminish their role. Both were, for example, placed side by side in Ascham's satirical image of the ship of Christ (as outlined above) and both included in his extended metaphor about the sleep of popery: 'The priests snore but not very quietly, for they are troubled by many worthless visions. The Bishops are drowsy; some sleep, but more restlessly; they are roused from their beds; they go around; they shout; they deny that there is any sleeping'.⁹⁵ And this was not the first time he had evinced an interest in the proper function of a bishop. As part of his Oecumenius translation project of 1542, he had selected the letter of Paul to Titus which deals primarily with the duties and standards of the elders and bishops who govern the Church.

Throughout his life Ascham would be openly bitter about certain individual bishops.⁹⁶ It also appears that he was willing to take action against them. In a letter to Raven he sent from Germany, Ascham wrote excitedly about some recent attack on bishops that Raven must have reported to him: 'If I might have had a stroke in bishoprics, I wish, etc, and I would I had been home at England at that time'; Ascham was almost certainly here noting his delight at the very public fall of two conservative bishops, Heath of Worcester and Ruge of Norwich, in 1550.⁹⁷ It is just possible that Ascham's contempt extended beyond individual bishops to the episcopal estate more generally. In a letter of 1562 in which Ascham expressed his pleasure in hearing about Sturm's work on the Lord's Supper, he wrote, by way of prayer, that 'I may see sometime the shafts of your pen against pontifical deceptions or prelates who occupy the more secret cells and almost all the better nests in the very temple of God'.⁹⁸ Ascham's treatment of bishops not only placed him in the company of strident Protestants but also brought into much sharper focus the depth of his anticlericalism.

4.3 Anticlericalism and National Consciousness

⁹⁴ *Apologia*, p.98.

⁹⁵ *Apologia*, p.65.

⁹⁶ See chapter 1.

⁹⁷ Letter to Raven (E) G:vol.1, 122, 1551, p.281. The reference is a rather elliptical one and developed no further. The fall of these bishops is outlined by MacCulloch in *Cranmer*, p.456.

⁹⁸ To Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 34, p.67/H:206, 1562.

A continuing theme in Ascham's depiction of priests was their foreign nature, and Ascham's notions of national identity and Englishness seemed to stem directly from his loathing of them. Ascham's anticlericalism, in combination with his presentation of clerics as 'the other', rendered the doctrinal conflict about the Eucharist a national one, the Lord's Supper the property of the English Church. Whilst it may be too early to speak of a fully blown 'Protestant nationalism' evident in Ascham's *Apologia*, the first traces of a sense of national identity were certainly apparent in early sixteenth century thought.⁹⁹ In Ascham, the forces of anticlericalism and nationalism blended with confessional identity and were mutually reinforcing; it was an important development of the Reformation that he both reflected and helped to shape.¹⁰⁰

There was a naturally extensive overlap between the rhetoric of antipopery and anticlericalism.¹⁰¹ This was built to a large extent on the Henry VIII's readiness to make the rejection of the Papacy a key element in a sense of English distinctiveness. Ascham capitalised on this, deliberately adding a xenophobic gloss and establishing a tight nexus between priests who supported Rome and the Pope and their foreign nature: 'Are men not also Papist followers who maintain that they are external priests?...let all the external priests acknowledge the Pope as their master and leader, whose name and command they follow'.¹⁰² Allegiance to popery was also underscored by Ascham through geographical specificity in his references (as mentioned earlier) to the city of Cologne, a known bastion of papal conservatism during the Reformation.¹⁰³ He made it clear that the allegiance to the Pope and Rome exhibited by priests was accepted as standard in Cologne. He then used the example to assert the existence of an external enemy within:

⁹⁹ See St German's part in helping to develop this, as per Eppley's *Defending Royal Supremacy and Discerning God's Will in Tudor England* (Aldershot, 2007). Influential in the promotion of a national consciousness were also the writings of two men close to Ascham: Morison's propaganda and Cheke's tract against sedition, as outlined in chapter 1 of H. Grabes (ed.), *Writing Early Modern English Nation: the Transformation of national identity in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (Amsterdam, 2001). See also Shrank, *Writing the Nation*, especially pp.1-2; T. Claydon and I. McBride (eds.), *Protestantism and national identity: Britain and Ireland c.1650-1850* (Cambridge, 1998), introduction *passim*, though they are careful to clarify that a Protestant national community was as much aspirational as actual.

¹⁰⁰ Marshall notes how early sixteenth century hostility for priests was fuelled by the traditional xenophobia of the English: *Priesthood*, pp.128-9.

¹⁰¹ Shrank, *Writing the Nation*, p.8. Davies, *Religion of the Word*, chapter 1 and p.32. It was also a feature of Henry's reign; bishops had been labelled as 'Romish wolves' by enemies, for example: A.A. Chibi, *Henry VIII's Bishops: diplomats, administrators, scholars and shepherds* (Cambridge, 2003), p.9. Note also the title of Turner's famous tract *The Hunting and Finding of Romish Fox* published in 1545.

¹⁰² *Apologia*, p.109.

¹⁰³ E. Cameron, *European Reformation* (Clarendon, 1991), p.262. The city council there had, *inter alia*, taken concerted action against Lutheran ideas and allowed the burning of his books.

Our men of Cologne in England don't dare to affirm this in words even though they are able, with no words, to extricate themselves from a defence of Papism. External priests of Cologne acknowledge the Pope as a high priest. External English priests reject the Pope in name and appropriate Christ as high priest. Men of Cologne (do this) for a particular reason, but the English priests do this contrary to all Scripture.¹⁰⁴

As if to hammer home the English-papal dichotomy, Ascham added by way of immediate contrast a reference to 'The English' who 'establish Christ as the head of the external priests since he came forth as the author of the spiritual priesthood which pertains to all those secured by his blood'.¹⁰⁵

Ascham, like some other reformers, also established the priesthood as a foreign body through reference to languages. He accused those who presided over the Mass of 'throwing everything into confusion' by resorting to a confection of alien tongues rather than English: '[You use] Syrian, Hebrew, the barbaric tongue, Greek, Latin when scarcely any priest, not to say the people, understand English!'¹⁰⁶ The very term 'the Mass' was, he claimed, a foreign word (of Syrian provenance) and he accused priests of relying on Jewish words to justify their sacrifice.¹⁰⁷ He presented priests' failure to use the vernacular as unscriptural and religiously ineffective. Referring directly to parts of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians (chapter 14) and repeating the Latin word *alienus* 'foreign/strange/alien', he reminded them: 'a foreign language is for a watchword for the faithless...For to use a foreign language which is not understood is nothing other than to be brought from human conversation into an inane din and chatter of birds'; there were also exhortations against 'pursuing a foreign language' and 'foreign lips'.¹⁰⁸ The emphasis on pride in the vernacular as a means to denigrate the clergy was also used by Gilby who, in *An Answer*, criticised priests' use of 'these wordes in a strange language'.¹⁰⁹ Richard Tracy, Inner Temple lawyer and outspoken religious activist, in a 1548 tract on the sacrament, included as the first abuse of the sacrament the priest's secrecy in uttering of the words of Christ's institution and spent two pages on the importation of 'strange' (his word, used repeatedly) languages into the sacrament.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ *Apologia*, p.110.

¹⁰⁵ *Apologia*, p.110.

¹⁰⁶ *Apologia*, p.55

¹⁰⁷ *Apologia*, pp.35 and 92.

¹⁰⁸ *Apologia*, p.57. Tadmor has demonstrated the significance of the translation of the Bible into the vernacular and the way in which the very act of translation became a patriotic one: *Social Universe English Bible*, p.17.

¹⁰⁹ sig.D2^r.

¹¹⁰ Tracy, *A bryef [and] short declaracyon made, wherbye euerye chrysten man maye knowe, what is a sacrament ... [and] finally of the abuse of the sacrament of chrystes body and bloud* (London, 1548) (STC 24162), pp.4-6 of EEBO (there are no numbers on his pages). OADB for Tracy.

Another significant way to exclude or marginalise along national lines during the Reformation was through anti-Jewish sentiment. Allegations of Judaizing could be applied to anyone, irrespective of confession.¹¹¹ However, at the start of Edward's reign, the prejudice would be fully appropriated by the Protestant movement and publicly endorsed in Erasmus's *Paraphrases* (disseminated across the realm) which were replete with references to Jewish ceremonies, religion, circumcision and superstition.¹¹² Jewish formalism was increasingly associated with Catholic ceremony and naturally lent itself to being used in support of an attack on the pomp and ritual of the Mass. Turner, for example, suggested that those who adhered to the Mass and its ceremonies were akin to the Jews.¹¹³ Others combined in a more specific way anti-Jewish hostility with attacks on the Mass priests: Gilby in his *Answer* referred to 'Jewish priests' and Bale referred insultingly to 'the Jewish bishops, Pharisees and priests'.¹¹⁴

The combination of Judaism with anticlericalism was an unusually marked one in Ascham's *Apologia*. Early on in his tract, he referred to 'an external and Jewish priesthood without any Scriptural authority' and he claimed that the term 'priesthood' was a Jewish word, 'a word that is despised in the ministry'.¹¹⁵ He referred dismissively to the Jewish Old Testament notions of priesthood, repeatedly scorning 'the tabernacle of their priesthood' and 'the Levitical priesthood'.¹¹⁶ In his lengthy investigation into etymology and the Biblical terms which priests might use to legitimate their sacrifice and their own priesthood, he frequently dismissed their use of terminology as 'Jewish', for example: [re the term *prophora*] 'If priests are able to scrape together something from this word in order to constitute their sacrifice, let them make the case themselves; I, for my part, find nothing unless on the off-chance I was wanting to desert to Judaism where this word is very common'.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ K. Austin, 'Immanuel Tremellius and the avoidance of controversy' in L. Racaut and A. Ryrie (eds.), *Moderate Voices in the European Reformation* (Aldershot, 2005), pp.76-79; Waite, *Heresy*, pp.96-99.

¹¹² As revealed by an EEBO search using the keyword 'Jewish' covering the period of Edward's reign.

¹¹³ *Newe Dialogue*, sig.G1^r.

¹¹⁴ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.D1^r. Bale, *First Examynacion*, ed. Christmas, p.174. Gilby would play on the unpatriotic intentions of the clergy although he would draw on fears about the Turk when he accused bishops of opening door to (Turkish) Mahumete (*An Answer*, sig.Aa4^r).

¹¹⁵ *Apologia*, pp.6 and 103

¹¹⁶ *Apologia*, pp.74-75.

¹¹⁷ *Apologia*, p.92.

He exploited to the full the association between priests in the Mass and the ritual of Judaism, even suggesting that contemporary priests outstripped their Jewish predecessors in this regard:

For who will think that Judaism has been removed? Who will think that the curtain of the temple has been torn, after he compares with Judaism the sacrifice of the Mass and the ceremonies for the people's sin of our external priesthood? We outdo the Jews in number and (yet) we abound in signs and images beyond all measure. Jewish priests were very skilled in tunics, belts and their ornaments. Ours have unlimited signs which they don't understand.¹¹⁸

The foreign nature of the priesthood was also reinforced by Ascham through his references to Judaism. He associated the origin of the Mass with the sacrifices of 'wicked Jewish priests... established at Baal'; and at one point used even more explicitly geographical language:

If neither the priestly sacrifice nor the sacrificing priesthood has a certain place under one of those headings, I fear that it will be fitting for it to be expelled from the occupation which it zealously keeps in the book of life and be compelled to withdraw into the territory of human doctrine and to the shores of the Jewish nation from whence the whole of it, whatever it is, came from.¹¹⁹

Ascham was operating in an atmosphere of increasing national self-awareness among Protestants. This was stimulated to a large extent by earlier state-sponsored anti-popery, but increasingly grew as a result of putting the Protestant faith at the very centre of English feeling. Ascham conjoined to these developments a distinctive anticlericalism which was then refracted through his theological stance on the Mass. It all made for an enlightening illustration of the different ways in which Reformation concerns could interact and add to a general erosion of the priest's status.

4.4 Anticlericalism - A Personal Phenomenon

Ascham's anticlericalism was unusually pronounced. It emerged in accordance with a range of particular themes which mirrored some common and long-standing sources of anticlerical prejudice exhibited by other reformers. But it also manifested itself in quite idiosyncratic ways, reflecting his own more private concerns and prejudices. That such marked expressions of personal bias could appear in a work of theological reform means we must be very sensitive in our historical analysis to a reformer's personal experiences and think about theological stances in a more textured way.

¹¹⁸ *Apologia*, p.107.

¹¹⁹ *Apologia*, pp.32 and 88-89.

One common strand of anticlerical discourse, often labelled ‘commonwealth’ by historians, was that which centred on a concern for social welfare, especially that of the vulnerable in society who had been let down, amongst others, by a corrupt clergy.¹²⁰ It was an older discourse but one fully harnessed to the Protestant cause and, certainly in Edward’s reign, had full official backing.¹²¹ At the forefront of this campaign to associate fairness with the Protestant Reformation were the Protestant preachers: Latimer and Lever preached numerous sermons about the evils of greed of the powerful, particularly the nobility and the clergy, at the cost of the ordinary people, the term ‘flocks’ often being used.¹²² They, like a number of other prominent Protestant reformers, also applied the message more specifically to the context of the Eucharist and, accordingly, deplored the spiritual thefts by the clergy from an innocent and trusting populace.¹²³ When Hooper in his exposition of the eighth commandment about theft in his *Declaration of the Ten Commandments* discussed both tenants’ rights and ‘thefts of the soul’, he was, as Shagan observes, essentially arguing that that support for economic fairness and denial of real presence were two sides of the same coin.¹²⁴ Becon, in his *Jewel of Joye*, depicted the Lord’s Supper as a form of hospitality in which the clergy were totally failing in their responsibility of feeding their flock ‘and the poor perish for hunger’.¹²⁵ Casting the clergy as an enemy of the people was one thing, but doing it in the context of the Eucharist meant one was essentially charging the clergy with jeopardising the salvation of individuals. The message was a highly damaging one, not least for the potential it had to contribute to the diminution of respect a community had for their clerical representatives.

¹²⁰ The older historiographical tradition in this area which tried to extrapolate a socialist programme from such expressions of concern, or even to identify a ‘commonwealth party’, has now been effectively dispatched. However, as more recent historians argue, it is impossible simply to discount the focus on the commonweal which featured in a considerable number of tracts of this time (G. Elton, ‘Reform and the “Commonwealth-Men” of Edward VI’s Reign’ in P. Clark, A.G.R. Smith and N. Tyacke (eds.), *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640: Essays in Politics and Society* (Leicester, 1979), pp.23-38; MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p. 125; and Davies, *A Religion of the Word*, p. 6).

¹²¹ Ryrie, *Age of Reformation*, p.172. Betteridge points out that the Edwardine Reformation itself embodied an implicit and often explicit programme of social reform that was coherent and potentially radical: *Literature and politics in the English Reformation* (Manchester, 2004), p.90.

¹²² *The works of Hugh Latimer*, ed., Rev. G.E. Corrie (P.S., Cambridge, 1844-45); and Lever, *Sermons etc.*, ed., E. Arber (London, 1870).

¹²³ For example, Latimer’s second sermon before the convocation of the clergy in 1536 (*Works Latimer*, ed., Corrie, pp.41-57). As Shagan comments (quoting Elton), the godly commonwealth provided a point of entry where Protestant ideas could be insinuated into popular culture (*Popular Politics*, p.133).

¹²⁴ Shagan, *Popular Politics*, p.278.

¹²⁵ *Jewel of Joye*, sigs.G1^r-G3^r.

Like many of these reformers, Ascham would also engage with the commonwealth theme. It is, however, interesting to observe that Ascham's 'commonwealth' rhetoric was primarily concerned with financial welfare. I discussed in chapter 1 the extent to which his concerns about the financial greed of the clergy and their lack of spiritual duty fuelled his resentment towards the Church. Indeed, it was precisely these grievances that featured in the Eucharistic context of his *Apologia*. The theme of clerical acquisitiveness was intricately woven into the detail of his doctrinal argumentation. Clerical lust for lucre was, for example, embedded in his rejection of the sacramental sacrifice: 'with the doctrine of Paul spurned, they [priests] have hidden themselves away in a booth of sacrificing, trading their own masses to no use of doctrine but for substantial financial gain.'¹²⁶ In order to expose priests who failed to fulfil their Scriptural obligations of ministration in the Eucharist, he stressed the importance of charity and care for the poor, repeating phrases such as 'serving to someone's need', 'collecting in aid of the Christian poor' and 'provision of the poor'.¹²⁷ Finally, into his Eucharistic argument he integrated claims of priestly avarice, both material and spiritual: 'They seize that which belongs to all Christians in order to establish their own private priesthood; how can what belongs to everyone be the private property of some?'¹²⁸ It appears that Ascham's own reasons for disliking the clergy had influenced this depiction of clerical extortion in the Mass.

Ascham's concern for the poor did not prevent him also arguing for the religious authority of the monarchy, another rallying point for anticlericalism. Tensions between Church and State, which had emerged with such force during Henry's reign and continued under Edward, inevitably implied and entailed some level of anticlericalism. No one living at this time could have remained impervious to the impact of the royal supremacy which effectively shoehorned Church into State and formed the legal justification for sweeping appropriations of Church property and power, incursions felt, as outlined in chapter 1, particularly acutely in Cambridge. However, in some reformers the ideology of Erastianism, namely a full allegiance to the Crown over the Church, was the vehicle for some far more radical expressions of anticlericalism than most could have envisaged; it was not, as historians have

¹²⁶ *Apologia*, p.97.

¹²⁷ *Apologia*, pp.95-98.

¹²⁸ *Apologia*, p.110.

observed, simply the case that the 'radical Reformation' bore only anti-institutional consequences.¹²⁹

Hooper was one of the most forthright advocates of the application of the royal supremacy and in his Eucharistic work he applied it in a striking way against the clergy.¹³⁰ In his *Answer* to Gardiner's defence of the Mass, he included a long exhortation addressed to Christian princes urging them to correct the religious abuses in the sacrament which had, according to him, been allowed to take root by the bishops of the land:

These things shuld move all Christiane princes to a reformation of these wronges that god susteynith by taking away his word from the people... The people ar committid unto the prince to susteyne the right of them all and not only to defend there bodis but also there soules... Every commonwealth owght to have but too governors: God and the prince, thone to make a law for the soule, thother for the body....¹³¹

Likewise, Ascham, in his theological work on the Eucharist, advertised his full support for the devolution of religious power to the monarch. In a passage very similar to Hooper's, he cast the monarch and other named nobles, rather than Church representatives, as ultimately responsible for the correct promulgation of and protection over the true version of the sacrament of the Supper:

To this end, [ie. the purging of the Mass] our Josias is inclined, to this end the noble Somerset entirely leans with the whole of the King's counsel, to this end the very noble Princesses Catherine and Elizabeth, the very distinguished leading ladies of Somerset and Suffolk and very many other excellent noble women have contributed more care and zeal than all sacrificers in England, almost than many bishops who especially ought to have exerted themselves in this matter... but he [Isaiah] gives comfort again and 'kings will be your nursing fathers and queens your nursing mothers'; with these leaders an acceptable Sabbath will be restored into England.¹³²

He also fully utilised the notion of the royal supremacy in order to subordinate totally the clergy to the monarch in the matter of confirming true doctrine. In two places he urged a regal inquisition of clerical activities: 'Would that even in this place also our King would

¹²⁹ E. Shagan, 'Armstrong and the Godly Commonwealth' in Ryrie and Marshall, *Beginnings of English Protestantism*, p.62. His essay is dedicated to a review of a very interesting Reformation figure, Armstrong, who similarly combined religious radicalism with the theme of the royal supremacy.

¹³⁰ Hooper managed to marry his own ecclesiastical position of influence with the theoretical separation of offices of magistrate and minister: Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.105.

¹³¹ Hooper, *Answer*, sigs.G1^v-G2^v.

¹³² *Apologia*, p.63. His incorporation of Somerset twice into this framework of supremacy was also extremely interesting. It is possible that Ascham also had in mind to construct a kind of supremacist rhetoric for him: on p.38 of his tract, he cast the supporters of the Mass as forgers of the King's coin 'when in actual fact there is nothing less royal'; one of the main reforms Somerset was responsible for addressing at the start of Edward's reign was to stop the prevalent counterfeiting of coinage: M. Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (London, 1964), p.49.

summon (to himself) the Mass-makers and seek (from them) by what right they coerce the populace to worship the sacrament'; and 'If the royal Majesty were to take the Gospel into his hands and were to order priests to indicate the places where the external priesthood and the Mass – the two things which have either removed the ministry of the Word and sacraments or obscured them – are treated, what would the priests bring forward?',¹³³

Ascham manipulated, more than many others, the idea of the royal supremacy in order to tarnish the clergy. In his Eucharistic work, he essentially accused priests of high treason when they performed the Mass. For example, during his semantic examination of the term 'priest', Ascham asseverated that Scripture used the term 'king' interchangeably with 'priest'.¹³⁴ This he then used (in a somewhat roundabout way) to suggest that priests might be guilty of an attempt to overthrow his majesty:

Besides, (unless I am deceived,) Scripture never makes mention of the priests of Christ except to the extent that he immediately substitutes the term 'king' or 'kingdom'But now I wish to hear what our priests are able to say. If they maintain that they are external priests through Scripture, why, therefore, do they not maintain that they are external kings through that same Scripture? For the Gospel contains no priest but that it deems the same man a king....[But] They don't dare call themselves external kings but, without a doubt, with that same reason by which they call themselves external priests, they can justifiably call themselves kings...

and he went on to state that this constituted a crime.¹³⁵

Ascham's conception of the relationship between monarch and Church was fundamentally based on the issue of legal jurisdiction. It had much in common with the hugely controversial thinker and writer St Christopher German, the Middle Temple lawyer. St German's arguments concerning the royal supremacy had made him one of the most formidable legal opponents of the clergy.¹³⁶ St German's tracts, particularly those written as part of an ongoing dispute with More, were fiercely anticlerical, laying blame for the division that had arisen between laity and ordained almost entirely on the abuses of clergy. They also emphasised the need for temporal powers to use legislative power to reform English

¹³³ *Apologia*, pp.44 and 113.

¹³⁴ Quoting Paul, Peter and Revelations (see *Apologia*, pp.105-106).

¹³⁵ *Apologia*, pp.105-6.

¹³⁶ See Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy*; A. Fox and J. Guy (eds.), *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500-1550* (Oxford, 1986), pp.1-4; and R.J. Schoeck, 'That most erudite of Tudor Lawyers, Christopher St German' *Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association Journal*, 4 (1983), pp.107-124.

ecclesiastical life.¹³⁷ One of St. German's primary aims was the development of a new theory of law which would effectively displace the notion that canon law was the common law of Christendom.¹³⁸ It is not too remote a possibility that Ascham likewise, albeit in his own way, intended to help overturn traditional claims by the Church to ultimate rights over all theological business and its determination. His work made several pointed references to the ecclesiastical law of heresy and he took great delight in suggesting that clerical agents in the Mass were guilty of the charges of heresy they themselves meted out.¹³⁹ He wrote, for example: 'Thus, those who say that they sacrifice Christ, just like a real sacrificial victim, to his Father in the Supper and don't just recall the memory of Christ who was only sacrificed once, ... undertake a crime of the order of a heretic's wickedness'.¹⁴⁰ If this is correct, Ascham's *Apologia* was not simply furthering the theological cause of the Protestant movement, but contributing to a more widespread challenge to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction.¹⁴¹

His manipulation continued in respect of another key aspect of Erastianism which Ascham enthusiastically took up, one related to jurisdiction, namely the Law. It was a theme harnessed in several anti-Mass tracts, especially those published in the printing explosion of 1548. William Punt and William Turner, for example, both structured their tracts within a judicial framework, putting a personified mother Mass on trial.¹⁴² The emphasis on the Law was magnified in Ascham's *Apologia*, driven on in part perhaps by his own legal affiliation with the Middle Temple.¹⁴³ There were numerous points at which he used specialist legal language and concepts against clerics. He referred to Christ taking out an 'injunction' against priests, Christians summoning all the priests to trial and the submission of an external priesthood to a tribunal of the Word of God.¹⁴⁴ He frequently called upon priests to 'prove' their case, for example, arguing that (in respect of their priestly consecration) '[the priestly

¹³⁷ Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy*, pp.61-2. St German's *Salem and Bizance*, for example, was full of anti-priest rhetoric.

¹³⁸ Fox and Guy, *Reassessing Henrician*, p.3.

¹³⁹ The issue of knee-jerk charges of heresy by the Church was one problem that was reviewed by the Reformation Parliament of 1529. Ascham referred to heresy regularly through the *Apologia*.

¹⁴⁰ *Apologia*, p.136. Heresy Laws were still operational for the whole of the first year of Edward's reign.

¹⁴¹ See R. Houlbrooke 'The decline of ecclesiastical jurisdiction under the Tudors' in R. O'Day and F. Heal (eds.), *Continuity and Change: personnel and administration of the Church of England 1500-1642* (Leicester, 1976), pp.239-57.

¹⁴² Punt, *A new dialogue called the endightment agaynste mother Messe* (London, 1548) (STC 20499). Punt was an Protestant polemicist who drew extensively on the writings of Turner and Bale (ODNB). Turner, *Newe Dialogue*, *passim*.

¹⁴³ See chapter 1.

¹⁴⁴ *Apologia*, pp.89 and 115.

order] never respond with proof (*testimoniis*) from Scripture... or with witnesses'.¹⁴⁵ This was often in conjunction with an invocation of the figure of a judge: (regarding the priestly sacrifice and external priesthood) '[priests] take blind custom and the Pope...as judges (*arbitros*) and fearlessly make a promise to abide by the arbiters' decision. For if anyone were to make an appeal from the Pope and custom to the judgement (*iudicium*) of the Word of God...note how all the priests...obstruct and resist'.¹⁴⁶ Each of these passages was brimming with legal idioms, such as: *lis*, *litis* ('lawsuit'), *interdictum* ('injunction'), *iniuria* ('injustice'), *ius* ('legal right/trial') and *vindico*, *-are* ('lay claim'). In fact, it is fair to say that the architecture of Ascham's entire tract, structured as it was around the Decalogue which he deferred to as the ultimate law of God, was legal in its configuration.

Lawyers were often seen as the most vocal representatives of the laity and Ascham's decision to remain a layman rather than go down the ecclesiastical route was a considered one, maintained throughout his life. His lay status and sense of allegiance to the laity were prominent features of his anticlericalism in the *Apologia*. Attempts by him and others to leverage a sense of lay solidarity against the clergy were particularly potent in the context of the Eucharist, the sacrament serving as an important locus for the development of a lay-clerical dichotomy. A technique which powerfully helped cement the divide and a feature of a number of Protestant tracts of Edward's reign was that which established lay and clerical representatives in direct opposition to each other. It was a device used in two other particularly subversive Eucharistic tracts right at the start of the reign. The first, entitled *A Dyalogue or Disputacion bytwene a Gentyلمان and a priest concerning the Supper of the Lorde*, was an anonymous tract structured around a dialogue between a lay gentleman and a priest in which they discuss the role of the priest in the Mass.¹⁴⁷ The conclusion of the discussion was a remarkable one: having been exposed throughout to the authority of Scripture by the gentleman, the priest accepted he was wrong, admitting that there was, after all, a great abuse in the sacrament. The second was by the notorious polemicist, Luke Shepherd, a tract called *Jon Bon and Master Parson*.¹⁴⁸ In it, a simple lay ploughman outstripped a priest in an argument concerning the issues of the celebration of Corpus Christi and transubstantiation.

¹⁴⁵ *Apologia*, p.119.

¹⁴⁶ *Apologia*, p.87.

¹⁴⁷ Published 1548 (STC 6802.5).

¹⁴⁸ *John Bon and Mast Person* (STC 3258.5).

In very much the same vein, Ascham established a lay archetype in his *Apologia*. In addition to his express use of the term *Laicus* (meaning ‘layman’), he repeatedly deployed the construct of the *aequus vir* (‘the reasonable man’) who was constantly shocked by various clerical abuses, at other times, the *simplex vir* (‘the simple man’), the layman, who interrogated a priest about his sacrificing on behalf of others.¹⁴⁹ This device was also significant inasmuch as it introduced a sort of lay objectivity in its scrutiny of clerical activity in the Eucharist. He also incorporated references to the trades of lay folk in direct contrast to the clergy in order to convey the idea of Protestantism being a faith available to ordinary honest men:

This one workshop of the Mass has always given sustenance to the most wicked artisans. The rest of the world’s workshops, cobblers, sculptors and weavers use great care not to admit the unskilled, to cultivate and embellish the dignity of their own trade. Only priests are ignorant and unskilled in that trade to which they have committed themselves.¹⁵⁰

But it was not simply the case that Eucharistic tracts were giving the lay man a voice. Some were positively embedding a language of lay rights into the theology of the sacrament. Turner’s tract very clearly demarcated a lay-clerical tension within the Eucharistic context and was explicit about lay entitlement:

All the laymen in England may celebrate the Supper of the Lorde and maye receive theyr ryghtes [my emphasis] as well as priestes, therefore they may all celebrate or do messe as well as the priestes may... When as a laye man maye as well receyve the Supper of the Lorde for a priest as a priest can do for a lai man, then might a lay man as wel say messe for a priest as a prest for a lay man...¹⁵¹

Ascham also emphasised the rights of laymen, making it even clearer than Turner that these existed, in spite of priestly claims to the contrary. Following an acerbic statement that ‘a sacrifice of such a kind should not pertain more to the priesthood than it does to another layman whoever he may be’, he declared that ‘when all Christians with equal right ought to commemorate (him) in the Supper, all Christians with equal right are accustomed to sacrifice in the Supper’.¹⁵² His anaphora of *aeque iure* (‘with equal right’) simply rendered his claim more trenchant in tone. The language of lay rights went to the heart of a doctrinal issue and the very nature of the Eucharist. It helped change the way it was now perceived as a communion rather than as a priestly show. In the context of the Eucharist, attempts to

¹⁴⁹ *Apologia*, pp.87, 24, 28 and 60 and pp.113-114.

¹⁵⁰ *Apologia*, p.68.

¹⁵¹ Turner, *A newe dialogue*, sigs.B8^v – C1^r.

¹⁵² *Apologia*, p.134.

galvanize a lay voice and a sense of lay grievance against the Mass clergy were significant factors in the divisive nature of the conflict it generated. The lay-clerical dichotomy was relevant not just to anticlericalism, but to a proper understanding of the theological disputes that rent asunder Christendom in the Reformation.

A further aspect of the lay-clerical divide which manifested itself within the Eucharist setting was the identity of the lay scholar. The main catalyst for the development of this lay opposition was clerical lack of learning. Concerns about the ignorance of the clergy had a long history. Lack of clerical knowledge and training were also perceived as genuine problems in Edward's reign and there were a number of constructive attempts to rectify the problem. Positive action was taken at a national level in the form of Injunctions issued in 1547 which provided, *inter alia*, that all churchmen must have in their parish a New Testament in Latin and English along with Erasmus's *Paraphrases*.¹⁵³ 'Every parson, vicar, clerke and beneficed man' was urged to provide stipends and exhibitions for 'scholars in the Universitie of Oxford and Cambridge' 'to the intent that learned men maye hereafter springe the more for the execution of the premisses'.¹⁵⁴ They reminded priests about their duties of teaching and preaching and included the additional stipulation that bishops should ensure that churchmen actually spent time reading them.¹⁵⁵ The Universities were also very much involved in these positive measures to overhaul the quality of the clergy. One of the primary aspirations of Fisher in the infancy of St John's College had been the production of a literate ministry.¹⁵⁶ However, it is clear that in some quarters in Cambridge, at any rate, concern about clerical illiteracy had moved from remedy to restive disdain.¹⁵⁷

A number of tracts, written noticeably by Cambridge-educated men, were articulating a profound agitation about a ministry devoid of learning. Lever, a John's man and licensed preacher, made a point of exposing the problem of an ignorant curate at parish level in a wholly irreverent way: 'the rude lobbess of the country, whiche be to symple to paynte a lye...saye: He [the priest] minisheth Gods sacraments, he flubbers up his service and he can

¹⁵³ Injunctions, sig.B4^r.

¹⁵⁴ Injunctions, sig.B3^r.

¹⁵⁵ Injunctions, sigs. B4^r and C2^r.

¹⁵⁶ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.106.

¹⁵⁷ It may be viewed as part of a broader zeitgeist, the 'laicisation of education' as Pettegree puts it, namely the long term erosion of a clerical monopoly of learning which was taking place in the Universities: *Reformation of the Parishes*, p.8. MacCulloch alludes to a long-standing Cambridge joke which pertained to secular dons' irritation at the unworthiness of some of the regular clergy at the University: D. MacCulloch, 'Two Dons in Politics', p.12.

not reade the humbles [ie. the homilies]'.¹⁵⁸ Others too appeared to be mobilising scholarship with a strong anticlerical flavour. Turner was quite explicit about the tension he considered to exist between learned lay scholars of Oxford and Cambridge and the ill-educated priests. He referred to 'a master of arte of Cambridge' and another 'at Oxford' and asked: 'Must they now be unlearned because they are no priestes?'.¹⁵⁹ This then culminated in an extensive argument which directly opposed lay scholarship with clerical pretensions:

And wheras ye would have the matter devolved unto some spirituall judge, thynkinge that I am not able to judge of thys matter for lacke of knowledge and learning in matters of religyon, I woulde not that ye should reken me to be unlearned in Goddes lawe because I am no bishop, as though only bishoppes and prelates were spirituall men and none elles...But all other Christen men have the spirit of god, then are al Christian men spiritual men....As for my knowledge in holy scripture...I would ye should know that I have been brought up in humanitie, logike and divinite in the unyversitye of Cambrynge till I was xxii yeres olde and that sence that time though common law hath bene my chief study, I have dilygently reade the scriptures from the beginning to the end whereby...I can discerne true religion from superstition.¹⁶⁰

Ascham set up a similar opposition between clerical ignorance and lay learning. Having cast the priest as an *indoctum Missatorem* (a 'Massmaker without learning'), he asserted that 'They [priests] reproach others for being ignorant of Scripture, when it is they themselves who are very ignorant. They neither have knowledge of languages or expertise in good arts, nor rate them'.¹⁶¹ They were also without the eloquence that training in rhetoric could bring: 'In the place of the gift of speech and erudition as a means to build our Church, (there exists) an incomprehensible din of lips and a throng of ignorant priests'.¹⁶² In order to fully amplify the contrast between clerical ignorance and lay scholarship, Ascham made a point of showcasing his own humanist learning at the moments where he was expressly disparaging the intellectual capabilities of the clergy. For example, immediately after writing 'Or shall I excuse the priests and say that they don't deviate from Christ's instruction? The position is too obvious for it to be able to be denied, their arrogance too great to be defended. They have no defence in ignorance...', Ascham posited a quotation from Sophocles, an ancient Greek playwright, 'Wicked deeds (occur) and bitter words arise'.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Lever, *Sermons*, ed., Arber, p.65.

¹⁵⁹ *Newe Dialogue*, sigs.B4^v-B5^r.

¹⁶⁰ *Newe Dialogue*, sigs.C5^v-C6^v. Turner was an expert in botany and combined this with his reforming activities.

¹⁶¹ *Apologia*, pp.61 and 119.

¹⁶² *Apologia*, p.6.

¹⁶³ *Apologia*, p.73.

Likewise, Gilby in his refutation of Gardiner deliberately paraded the superiority of lay humanist learning over clerical educational deficiency. He argued: ‘These heretickes [clergy] are proude and arrogant, they have no learninge, they have not studied for knowledge... We have laboured for knowledge, as diligentlie with humble hertes as you have done. God hath imbued us wyth the knoweledge of the latine, greke and hebrue and al other sciences far above that you had when you were in the scholes.’¹⁶⁴ He then used the specific example of Oecolampadius as the paragon of humanist learning to embarrass clerical shortcomings, observing, for example: ‘How excellent was he in the Hebrue, Greke and laten tongue; how well learned in al sciences? How deape a searcher of the misteries of the prophetes and other scriptures? How learned and faithfull translatour of your owne doctors?’¹⁶⁵ Finally, in a subsection entitled ‘To the bishops’, he drew a compelling contrast between the translation skills of the lay scholar with episcopal inability on this front.¹⁶⁶

In the context of Eucharistic reform the opposition of the lay scholar of the humanities and the clergy was a noticeably coherent one. It is interesting to note that some of the most public proponents of this antithesis were Cambridge-trained men who had an uneasy relationship with the Church: Turner, for example, would be called to trial at an ecclesiastical court for a contravention of his diaconal vow of chastity (he married); Gilby, the evidence suggests, eschewed the priesthood.¹⁶⁷ In this respect, Ascham seems to have belonged to a growing University tendency to detach itself from the Church. However, attempts to shame the clergy through expertise in the humanities was not just about anticlericalism. They also related to another conflict about the role of humanism in the sphere of theology which, as the next chapter covers, was a deeply contested and crucial one.

¹⁶⁴ *An Answer*, sigs.C6^{r-v}.

¹⁶⁵ *An Answer*, sig.S5^v.

¹⁶⁶ *An Answer*, sig.Aa3^r.

¹⁶⁷ ODNB entries for Turner and Gilby. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p.161 (re Gilby).

Chapter 5: Ascham as Humanist

This thesis has argued that Ascham was a reformer who was at the vanguard of the early Edwardine Protestant movement. Yet, as illuminating this depiction of Ascham may be, it is also highly problematic on account of the long-standing and universally accepted classification of Ascham as a ‘humanist’. The relationship between theological reform and humanism is a notoriously difficult one to pin down and has been much debated, not only in the sixteenth century itself but in all subsequent historiography. In the final analysis, the two often end up as being viewed as separate spheres of activity and thought. This chapter will suggest that Ascham’s *Apologia* can be read as a humanist work just as much as a progressively theological one and that humanism and theology were far closer than history writing currently acknowledges.

There can be no doubt about the distinctly humanist texture of Ascham’s *Apologia*. The work evinced a range of typically humanist skills, interests and emphases, a number of which derived directly from the *studia humanitatis* of the Cambridge University course. These included history, expertise in the Greek language, classical literature, and rhetoric. Repeatedly, however, these humanist disciplines were practically and ideologically interwoven into programme for Protestant reform. Ascham’s humanism was fundamentally bound up with his theology and his tract can only be properly read and understood once that interdependence has been fully appreciated.

5.1 A Sixteenth Century Tension

Although I argue in this chapter for the compatability of humanism and theology and the extent to which they could operate in parallel, there existed even in the sixteenth century itself a sense in which the two were very much separate; indeed, not only separate, but opposed. One of the emblematic moments in the crystallisation of this opposition was Erasmus’s high-profile dispute with Luther and other theologians. In direct response to Erasmus’s new translation into Latin and Greek of the New Testament in 1516, Luther had advised to Erasmus to ‘stay clear of theology’.¹ There was a similar reaction from the theologians of the Paris Faculty who subsequently warned against the dangers of studying

¹ F. Lau and E. Bizer, *A History of the Reformation in Germany to 1555*, trans. B.A.Hardy (London, 1969), p.154.

pagan literature and deemed Greek a pejorative epithet. They told Biblical humanists that knowing Greek and Hebrew did not equate to being a perfect and consummate theologian, and that those who had been instructed in the discipline of theology were to be considered ‘philologists (*grammatici*), not theologians’.² Although Erasmus was, up until the mid 1520s, called a ‘theologian’, thereafter contemporaries denied him the title, referring to him instead as a ‘humanist’.³ Erasmus’s perceived withdrawal from further conflict seemed to cement the divide still further.⁴

This conflict, however, was not as straightforward as the above description suggests. ‘Humanist’ and ‘theologian’ were artificial constructs and the black and white nature of the labels was in no small degree engineered by those who had a vested interest in creating such a divide.⁵ In actual fact, the apparent antagonism between humanism and theology masked a deeper reality about their compatibility and overlap. Certainly, the popular saying that ‘either Erasmus lutheranizes or Luther erasmianizes’ points to a rather closer proximity.⁶ The reaction to Erasmus’s New Testament was as extreme as it was precisely because the ability of humanist techniques to challenge or even change theology was now recognised. Edward Lee, then a lowly student in Louvain, had understood very clearly the full impact on theology of Erasmus’s ‘textual criticism’ and predicted assaults on orthodox dogma, including the sacramental system.⁷ Through his use of Greek philology and linguistic skills, Erasmus had brought to light features of Scripture which, at one stroke, could undermine an entire set of doctrines and penetrate theology in a way that traditional systems could not.

A similarly artificial divide between humanism and theology arose out of a tension between style over substance. A frequent feature of sixteenth century theological tracts was a profession of simplicity and plainness over anything that might be deemed intellectual posturing or humanist rhetoric. The title page of Smith’s work, the *Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, for example, contained the words: ‘It is much better to bring forth true thynges

² Rummel, *Confessionalization Humanism*, p.66.

³ Rummel, *Confessionalization Humanism*, p.4.

⁴ E. Rummel, *Erasmus* (London and New York, 2004), pp.xiii, 20 and 82. Erasmus had claimed to be concerned only with textual criticism, preferring to leave exegesis to professional theologians. A further example of Erasmus’s denial that what he was doing was theology can be found in his prefatory letter to the highly spiritual work, *Enchiridion*, in which he suggests that this was not really a contribution to theological discussion: *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol.66., ed. J.W. O’Malley (Toronto, 1988), p.8.

⁵ Rummel refers to the propaganda purposes that underlay the conflict: *Confessionalization Humanism*, p.5.

⁶ Rummel, *Confessionalization Humanism*, p.28.

⁷ R. Coogan, *Erasmus, Lee and the correction of the Vulgate: the shaking of the foundations* (Geneva, 1992), introduction.

rudely then false thynges eloquently’ and a short way into the tract he emphasised that ‘Scripture was writen without eloquence and colours of rhetorike’.⁸ William Peryn, in the dedication (to the Bishop of London) of his 1546 *Sermons on the Honourable and Blessed Sacrament of the Altar*, stated: ‘I have chieflye prepared them [the sermons] for the unlearned. And the veryte (being delectable and bewtifull of herselfe) nedeth not the gorgius ornamentes of eloquens. Also the matters of our fayth hath moche lesse nede of rethoricall perswacyons...’.⁹ Hooper in his *Answer* accused Gardiner of being fully aware of ‘what may be donne by the verteue of a sure and well-orderyd oracion’ and ‘how mouch it avaylythe whether it perswade a trewth or a falsite....[but] scripture is playne, it has that it has souche vehemency and effect in itselfe’.¹⁰ However, once again, such remarks must not be taken at face-value. In each of the examples, the terms ‘rhetoric’ and ‘eloquence’ were being used within a shifting polemical framework and were not at all representative of a straightforward opposition between showy humanism and the hard business of theological reform. Such charges were, furthermore, disingenuous: within a landscape of conflict, the power to persuade and convince was arguably greater than it had ever been before.¹¹ The reality behind much of the stereotyping that occurred about ‘humanists’ or ‘theologians’ in the sixteenth century was in fact considerable correspondence of both thought and activity.

Finally, and highly pertinent to this analysis, was the sixteenth century use of the Latin word from which humanism derived – *humanitas*. There can be no doubt that in many instances contemporary references to *humanitas* seemed to denote one original meaning of the word, namely ‘politeness’ or ‘gentleness’.¹² However, just as important a meaning of the classical Latin term *humanitas* was ‘mental cultivation’ or ‘linguistic refinement’, senses of the word which were, in the main, promoted by Cicero, often within a distinctly polemical and divisive framework such as his prosecution speeches. Close scrutiny of Ascham’s use of the term *humanitas* over a period of many years reveals that what he had in mind was precisely this sense. In the vast majority of cases, his references to *humanitas* appeared within a context of

⁸ *Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, title page and fol.18^r.

⁹ Peryn, *Thre godly and notable sermons, of the moost honorable and blessed sacrament of the aulter* (London, 1546) (STC 19786), fourth page of dedication.

¹⁰ *Answer*, sig.A2^v.

¹¹ A point made in P. Matheson, *The Rhetoric of the Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1998), p.1 and Pettegree, *Reformation Culture Persuasion*. See also Hunt’s study of the two-way relationship between preacher and audience and the close interaction between the written, the spoken and ‘the heard’: A. Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge, 2011).

¹² For example as identified by: McConica, *Humanists*; and Rummel, *Confessionalization Humanism*. Pincombe points out that Ascham’s correspondence was full of praise for *humanitas* in the sense of general courtesy in *Elizabethan Humanism: literature and learning in the later sixteenth century* (Harlow, 2001), p.69.

scholarship, and, more to the point, religious scholarship. So, for example, in a 1542 letter to Seton, Ascham referred to his translation of the Oecumenius commentary on Philemon which he had enclosed as ‘a gift of *humanitas*’.¹³ In 1546 he invoked the term *humanitas* in a letter to Wriothesley in which he was requesting, in the name of Jesus Christ, the maintenance of Cambridge University’s academic privileges: he referred ‘to the greatest splendour when man’s intellect has been adorned with learning. Only learned men do this so that they may... keep the name of *humanitas* genuine...this privilege of ours has been sound and inviolate for many centuries’.¹⁴ A few years later, he would use it in a letter to Sturm in an explicitly confessional context which expressly contrasted the learning of *humanitas* with papism: ‘I much prefer your very pleasant letters full of Sturmiian qualities of learning, eloquence and *humanitas* to all that Turkish, papist, Imperial and French business’.¹⁵ He was also clear in a letter of 1553 to Paget in which he enclosed a book of rhetoric that he considered the learning that *humanitas* entailed to constitute something divine and he actually defined the term: ‘The name [ie *humanitas*] of this virtue is indeed from *homo* but the attribute descends from God whose goodness descends with it’.¹⁶ For Ascham, *humanitas* was not the defining virtue of a humanist that transcended or stayed aloof from theology, but a quality of learning that lay at the heart of religion.

5.2 Historiography

There is a huge corpus of historical theorising on the nature and role of humanism in the early modern period. Recent studies have highlighted, for example, the importance of humanism in helping to shape national identity, its influence on the development of social order, its role in civic life and the concept of citizenship, and its displacement of older systems in the field of education.¹⁷ Most complex of all is the historiographical treatment of the relationship between humanism and theological reform. On the whole, the general approach has been one that reinforces their separation, be it chronological, cultural or intellectual. The chronological disjunction is rooted in an artificial Renaissance-Reformation dichotomy which tends always to present humanism as a precursor to fully-fledged theological change, focusing either on its

¹³ (L) G:vol.1, 11/H:11, 1542.

¹⁴ (L) G:vol.1, 54/H:54, 1546.

¹⁵ (L) G:vol.1, 117/V&H:42, 1551.

¹⁶ (L) G:vol.1, 161/H:147, 1553.

¹⁷ Shrank, *Writing the Nation*; Todd, *Christian Humanism and Social Order*; J.F. McDiarmid, *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2007); T. Grafton and L. Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: education and the liberal arts in fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe* (London, 1986); and Jardine, ‘Humanism Cambridge Arts Course’.

influence on theological reform or its victimhood in the age of confessionalisation.¹⁸ In the English context, at any rate, certain individuals like Colet and More have been heralded as the epitome of humanism, the demise of whom coterminously marked its end, or cast as men who paved the way for a theological Reformation, only to be subsequently submerged by it.¹⁹ Though some of these notions have now been dismissed in theory, the sheer preponderance of articles and books on Tudor humanism set in the reign of Henry VIII when the theological Reformation in England was in its nascent stages compared with the paucity of the same in Edward's reign, a period more commonly associated with fully-fledged Protestantism, is striking and merely serves to reinforce the chronological assumptions.²⁰ In Davies' recent comprehensive assessment of the Edwardine reign, humanism barely warrants a mention except insofar as to expressly absorb it within an overarching Protestant regime.²¹

To counter this, there are some studies of humanism which do maintain humanism's continuation rather than decline even as the Reformation progressed. Woolfson's edited collection of essays points to the long life-span of Tudor humanism and argues that humanism could assume a distinctly religious character, asserting that it was, for example, perfectly possible to be both a humanist and a committed and uncompromising Protestant.²² Generally, however, studies of humanism and its role during the Reformation tend to confine their discussions to a certain brand of humanism, namely the Erasmianism of Christian humanists.²³ Whilst there is an obvious overlap between this type of humanism and more general aspects of religious life such as Christian piety, morality, ethics and ecclesiastical ideology, it engages less well, if at all, with the theological hardening that evolved in the

¹⁸ W.A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535* (New Haven and London, 1964). Such assessments often rely on Luther's declaration that the humanist programme for ecclesiastical reprimatation paved the way directly to theological reform, likening the Renaissance to John the Baptist. See also Rummel's study of humanism in Germany in which she examines the ways in which humanism was affected by growing confessionalization; humanism is presented throughout as having to adapt and retreat and accommodate, rather than initiate and lead (*Confessionalization Humanism*).

¹⁹ R.W. Chambers, *Thomas More* (London, 1967) who compared More to Socrates; H.E. Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers* (London, 1914).

²⁰ Dowling, *Humanism Henry VIII* and McConica, *Humanists*.

²¹ Davies, *Religion of the Word*, p.xx.

²² J. Woolfson (ed.), *Reassessing Tudor Humanism* (Basingstoke, 2002), introduction *passim* and essays by M.A. Overell ('Edwardian Court Humanism and Il Beneficio di Christo, 1547-1553') and J.N. King ('John Foxe and Tudor Humanism'). There is also a PhD thesis by J.K. Yost which argues that as Christianity moved rapidly and even radically in the direction of continental Protestantism during reign of Edward VI, the humanist ingredient became stronger ('The Christian humanism of the English Reformers, 1525-1555: A Study in English Renaissance Humanism' (Duke University, PhD thesis, 1965).

²³ L.E.C. Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism* (Oxford, 2000) which focuses on the Marian regime, and Todd, *Christian Humanism Social Order* and Pincombe, *Elizabethan Humanism* which concentrate on the Elizabethan period.

post-Henrician Reformation. Furthermore, in associating humanism with Erasmus, it is impossible to ignore his conflict with Luther over the question of free will. Such an association has had several repercussions in the historiography of humanism as a cultural and intellectual phenomenon.

The first is the association of humanism with doctrinal moderation, eirenic reform, doubt, collegiality and accord.²⁴ McConica, for example, describes the tempering influence of Erasmian humanism on the radical Protestantism of Edward's reign.²⁵ This is very much a feature of Racaut and Ryrie's *Moderate Voices* which associates humanism with an Erasmian force for conciliation and a reluctance to become embroiled in theological squabbles.²⁶ Such studies, whilst enormously helpful, tend to skew the picture to the point that little scope is left for considering how humanism may operate in parallel with a more aggressive theological reform agenda. These studies also tend to sideline the fact that pleas for religious toleration did not necessarily negate a zeal for evangelical reform. They need to be set against the examples of reformers like Bucer and Melanchthon whom it has been shown did combine ongoing humanism with ecumenical yet purposive theological reform.²⁷

In some quarters, another historiographical ramification of the association of Erasmianism and humanism has been a perpetuation of the earlier (and aforementioned) focus on style and corresponding assumptions about a lack of (theological) seriousness. This may, in part, be owing to the fact that Erasmus founded no church which could systematically perpetuate the memory of his philosophy. There are exceptions, but, as Rummel points out, the fact is that

²⁴ Porter concludes that reformers parted company with Erasmus where he parted company with Luther: *Reformation and Reaction*, p.60. With direct reference to this quarrel, historians have highlighted the fundamental difference in anthropological outlook between humanists and Lutheran theologians, reasoning that the *humanitas* of the humanists, namely the optimistic belief in the capacity of humans to improve their own lot, runs contrary to an Augustinian-inspired Protestantism which emphasised the sinful, helpless and corrupt condition of mankind; for example, G. Elton 'Humanism in England' in A. Goodman and A. Mackay (eds.), *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe* (London, 1990), pp.272 and 277. An extension of the same point maintains that the reformers' Christology contrasted strongly with the Christocentrism of the Christian humanists; for the theological reformers, Christ served as the exemplar which wholly infused a life not just an exemplum, a nice model to be followed in leading a Christian life: L. Spitz 'Humanism and the Protestant Reformation' in A. Rabil, ed., *Renaissance and Humanism: Foundations, forms and legacy*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1988), vol.3, p.384. In Rummel's *Confessionalization Humanism*, there is a whole chapter on the humanist *ars dubitandi* ('art of doubt').

²⁵ McConica, *Humanists*, chapter 8.

²⁶ M. Greengrass' conclusion ('Moderate voices: mixed messages') to Racaut and Ryrie (eds.), *Moderate Voices*, p.207.

²⁷ Chapters on Melanchthon by Kusukawa and Bucer by I.P. Hazlett in Bagchi and Steinmetz (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*. It is pointed out, for example, that despite Melanchthon's mild and eirenic demeanour, Melanchthon could be a fierce and devastating polemicist (p.57). See also M. Greschat, *Martin Bucer: A Reformer and His Times*, trans. S.E. Buckwalter (Louisville and Westminster, 2004).

Erasmus's contribution has in many countries now been reduced from religious thinker to style model and the term 'Erasmianism' used to denote a writer who exemplified his rhetorical skills.²⁸ It is perhaps in this vein that critics from Francis Bacon to C S Lewis have reduced the whole of Ascham's learning to verbal aesthetics and a concern for 'words over matter'.²⁹ In respect of the *Apologia* in particular, Ryan has written of it: 'Even a cursory reading...shows the *Apologia* to be more an exhibition of his Latin style and an effort to sway by misapplied rhetoric than a soundly reasoned treatise in theology' and dismissed its theological weight on the grounds that 'Ascham depends almost entirely for effect on his Latin prose style, on wit and word-play'.³⁰ There are a few disparate exceptions which can be used to combat this prevailing consensus. Attention has, for example, been drawn to the beauty of Tyndale's translations and the way in which the words he chose, whilst being faithful to the original, also happened to have great rhetorical effect and style.³¹ McDiarmid's study of Cheke's Ciceronian philosophy of eloquence has shown how it found expression in and informed his theological development.³² It has also been argued that Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* (of 1553) successfully united classical rhetorical skills with an anti-papal message.³³ These notwithstanding, the default position in any historical assessments of humanism tends primarily to be the bifurcation of style and theological conviction.

The conflict between Luther and Erasmus has, in the past, also spawned some quite misleading generalisations about the anti-intellectualism of theological Protestantism in comparison to the academic freedom and lively intellectualism of humanism.³⁴ Such crude characterisations are now being eroded with an increased focus on the intellectual nature of

²⁸ Rummel, *Erasmus*, p.xiv and p.106. An obvious exceptions is G.D. Dodds' *Exploiting Erasmus: The Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto, 2009) which considers Erasmus' legacy in the later English Church; Dodds even observes how, over time, Erasmus provided an intellectual framework that would be anti-Calvinist (see introduction and p.28).

²⁹ F. Bacon, 'The Advancement of Learning' in *The Collected Works of Francis Bacon*, eds., J. Spedding, R.L. Ellis and D.D. Heath (London, 1878), vol.6; and C.S. Lewis, in *The Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford, 1954), vol.3. Vos, 'Good Matter and Good Utterance', p.3; and Medine 'Roger Ascham's *Toxophilus*', p.23.

³⁰ Ryan, *Ascham*, pp.96-97.

³¹ J. Moore, 'Tyndale's Influence on the 1611 Bible', *Tyndale Society Journal*, 41 (2012), p.20.

³² A paper entitled '*Hoc quod in Cicerone excellens est*: The Protestant Ciceronianism of Sir John Cheke' which Professor McDiarmid kindly forwarded to me.

³³ Shrank, *Writing the Nation*, chapter 5 *passim*. O'Day comments in Ascham's ODNB that Ascham influenced Wilson's approach to language in this work.

³⁴ One only has to input the words 'anti-intellectual', 'Luther', 'Erasmus', 'humanism' and 'intellectual' into an internet search-engine to witness this. As Rex points out, there was a real danger that doctrines such as justification by faith alone might lead to anti-intellectualism ('Humanism', p.68).

the religious Reformation.³⁵ As Ryrie puts it, the intellectualism of Protestantism is hard to overestimate.³⁶ This verdict is certainly supported by Ascham's *Apologia* and the value he placed on scholarship and learning in his evangelical attack on the Mass. His humanism was fundamental to his theological outlook which had as its goal not just faith but well-informed faith.³⁷

When it comes to thinking about the ideological possibilities of humanism, there is a further strand of revisionist historiography that must be considered. A number of historians have argued against overly diffuse treatments of humanism which give the misleading impression of a coherent and immutable category of humanists connected through the generations by a single system of thought.³⁸ Humanism as a cultural phenomenon was clearly more complex and pluralistic than this.³⁹ Consequently, these historians have been much stricter in defining 'humanism' and 'humanist' in accordance with the semantic origins of these terms, namely the classical educational programme which grew out of the Renaissance, the *studia humanitatis*⁴⁰ as practised by a university teacher, the *humanista*.⁴¹ There are many advantages to this approach. It is now much easier for scholars to demonstrate the interaction of humanism with and its impact on a wide range of disciplines without suggesting that its practitioners were committed to a single philosophical or religious outlook.⁴² It has also helped to stimulate research into the full variety of humanism's cultural and intellectual values which transcended confessional differences.⁴³ As welcome as these historiographical advances have been, there now exists an appreciable tendency to restrict any analysis of

³⁵ For example, S. Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven and London, 1980); McGrath, *Intellectual Origins*.

³⁶ Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, p.261.

³⁷ Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, p.262.

³⁸ Acknowledging a debt to Kristeller, Fox was the first to pursue this iconoclastic revisionism in Fox and Guy (eds.), *Reassessing Henrician*, part 1; this was endorsed by G. Elton in 'Humanism in England'.

³⁹ Fox pointed out that within the nebulous group who may qualify as 'humanists', the differences were considerably more striking than their similarities (*Reassessing Henrician*, pp.22-27). Fox and Guy claim English humanism constituted a 'multifarious phenomenon' (*Reassessing Henrician*, p.1); Woolfson refers to the 'multiple guises' of Tudor humanism (*Reassessing Humanism*, p.13).

⁴⁰ Originating in Cicero's Academy, this comprises the study, through classical texts, of a number of educational disciplines, namely: grammar (ie textual study), rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy/ethics through classical texts (which came to be termed 'the humanities') as outlined in P.O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources* (New York, 1979).

⁴¹ P.O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classics, Scholastics and Humanistic Strains* (New York, 1961, rpt. 1990), chapter 1. MacCulloch similarly defines 'humanist' as an 'editor of (classical) texts' (*Reformation*, p.80).

⁴² Rex, 'Role of English Humanists', *passim*; J. Kraye, *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge, 1996), p.xv and *passim*.

⁴³ Kraye's edited volume of essays cited above surveys a full range of disciplines with which humanism engaged (including political thought, art, science and philosophy) and see, in particular, the preface (*Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*).

humanism's interaction with religious reform to the remit of cultural piety rather than theological and doctrinal development.⁴⁴ The educationally-rooted definitions of humanism and humanist have also predisposed some historians to view humanism's engagement with the religious Reformation as purely contingent in nature, treating humanism simply as a set of educational tools applied in a pragmatic way to the official reform programme and disinclined to explore how any ideology inherent in humanism *qua* humanism could have a bearing on theological reform.⁴⁵

It may be that we can better appreciate the capacities of humanism by turning from the English to the European context. In studies of humanism on the continent, there is not the same reluctance to link humanism to theological reform. Melancthon, in particular, has emerged as a reformer whose humanist skills and values formed the bedrock of his systematic theological reform.⁴⁶ Schofield has surveyed his calculated combination of Renaissance and Reformation values and the way in which he harnessed the entire humanist repertoire of learning, classics, philology and languages into his unambiguously confessional works.⁴⁷ As discussed in chapter 1, Melancthon was a reformer dear to Ascham's heart, his *Loci Communes* being expressly incorporated by Ascham into his teaching sessions with the princess Elizabeth. Johannes Sturm, with whom Ascham had a long-standing and close epistolary relationship, was another important Reformation figure whose humanist values, such as his love of Cicero, served to fire his impetus for reform, culminating in his founding of the Strasbourg Gymnasium which was not only a humanist centre for learning but a seat of Lutheran and later Calvinist reform.⁴⁸ There have also been recent re-evaluations of other reformers, like Luther and Calvin, which suggest that they are more humanist in their orientation that was previously thought.⁴⁹ Spitz on the German Reformation generally has

⁴⁴ As Woolfson comments, 'The dominant historiographical consensus now rarely considers humanists to have espoused as an inherent part of their activity as humanists a particular moral, philosophical or religious message' (*Reassessing Humanism*, p.2). For an example of this, see Fox on Ascham and Cheke in *Reassessing Henrician*, p.30.

⁴⁵ Rex in his 'Role of English Humanists' (p.22) writes 'there was little a humanist scholar could do *qua* humanist scholar which bore directly on religious change'.

⁴⁶ K. Maag, (ed.), *Melancthon in Europe: his work and influence beyond Wittenberg* (Carlisle, 1999); Schofield, *Melancthon*, chapters 1-3.

⁴⁷ Schofield, *Melancthon*, p.51 and introduction to Melancthon's 1555 *Loci Communes* ed., Manschreck.

⁴⁸ Vos, 'Good Manners and Good Utterance, The Character of Ciceronianism', pp.10-12; Vos 'Ascham's Prose Style' refers to 'spiritual kinship' Ascham and Sturm felt (p.363); Spitz and Tinsley (eds.), *Sturm on Education*, pp.11-12. Rummel has observed that Sturm was a tireless champion of the humanities and in his eyes the reform of religion could never be at odds with the preserve of learning: *Confessionalization Humanism*, p.41.

⁴⁹ L.W. Spitz, *Luther and German Humanism* (Aldershot, 1996); I.P. Hazlett 'Calvin's Latin Preface to his Proposed French Edition of Chrysostom's Homilies: Translation and Commentary' in J. Kirk (ed.), *Humanism*

highlighted the continuous and central role of humanism within Protestantism.⁵⁰ One should consider Ascham not simply as belonging to the same mould as these reformers, but to some extent working with them to promote and install the type of intellectual Reformation they envisaged.

This chapter shows how humanism and theology could converge both practically and ideologically in Ascham's work.⁵¹ It explores this with regard to Ascham's Protestant convictions, but in no way proposes that a similar nexus could not apply *mutatis mutandis* within a different theological school of thought; indeed, as I observe in passing, conservative reformers were often using the same approaches in their theological bids for reform. My chapter does not assume that humanism led inexorably to Protestantism or, conversely, that it was somehow 'confessionalized' or absorbed within Protestantism; in fact, humanism and theological reform of many sorts developed in harmony together. This chapter also utilises the concept of the *studia humanitatis*, though without casting humanist training and skills as mere tools or adjuncts. It argues instead that the disciplines of history, classical literature, Greek and rhetoric could be translated into the idiom of the Reformation and fully embedded within its theological formulations. The relationship between the two was a dynamic one: the skills of humanism could inform theological positions and bring them into sharper definition; at the same time, these humanist skills and the classical works were invested with a theological authority and a faith in their power to disclose divine truth. Collectively, they could constitute a theological approach of their own, a 'humanist theology'. In the case of Ascham, he was not born either a humanist or a theological reformer, nor did he move from being a humanist to a theologian: he was both throughout.

5.3 Humanist Skills and Concerns

This section will examine the different elements of the *studia humanitatis* in turn. It is clear that these humanist disciplines or techniques were wholly integral to Ascham's theological message. They represented another source of inspiration, another way of looking at the

and Reform: The Church in Europe, England and Scotland, 1400-1643 (Oxford, 1991), pp.137-8; Spitz 'Humanism and the Protestant Reformation', p.382; and McGrath, *Intellectual Origins*, p.55-58.

⁵⁰ Spitz, 'Humanism and the Protestant Reformation', pp.381-411.

⁵¹ Sowerby, *Morison*, highlights in the introduction that two themes dominate her study: Morison's humanism and evangelicalism (p.2). McDiarmid shows how Cheke's translation of and preface to Plutarch's *De Superstitione* (of 1546) combined classical nous and linguistic flair with an evangelical agenda to combat superstition in religion: 'Cheke's Preface to *De Superstitione*', p.102 and generally in his articles has tried to raise the historiographical profile of 'Protestant humanism' as a phenomenon within mid-Tudor intellectual culture.

world.⁵² They also gave rise to a range of powerful ideas and opinions that fed directly into Ascham's theological perspectives and, in turn, came to be endowed with a religious value of their own.

5.3.1 History

History has long been thought of as a humanist area of interest and as a humanist academic discipline. It was an important element in the University arts courses at Cambridge, for example, in which the reading of ancient historians was increasingly encouraged.⁵³

MacCulloch, who stresses the increased importance of history for scholars who were now having to reliably date huge numbers of classical manuscripts that began to circulate in the West during the Renaissance, associates it fully with the humanists.⁵⁴ Spitz, in his review of German humanists, comments on the special honour they gave to history.⁵⁵ Woolfson argues that part of the originality of humanists lay in their profoundly historical approach.⁵⁶ History was certainly of major interest to Ascham: his sixteenth century biographer, Grant, referred to how Ascham was 'captivated and delighted by the pleasure of history'.⁵⁷ It was a passion that would come to full fruition in 1553 when he composed his *Report of Germany*, a historical account of the period 1548-53 which charted the conflicts between the German princes and the Emperor Charles V.⁵⁸ In a letter sent to Ascham from Sturm concerning this historical project, Sturm would encourage Ascham in his endeavours, saying of Ascham 'you who know so well the laws of History' and adding 'It is your duty to write history'.⁵⁹ It was a discipline in which Ascham demonstrated a good level of professional competence.⁶⁰

As regards the role of history in the Reformation, there has been some recognition of its importance. History's natural predisposition to search for origins dovetailed with a Reformation appetite for a return *ad fontes*. Scholars have discussed its important application

⁵² A not dissimilar point has been made by McGrath who writes that '*ad fontes* was not only a call to ancient sources but to the essential realities of human existence and a summons to search for experience and meaning': *Intellectual Origins*, p.42.

⁵³ Jardine, 'Humanism Cambridge Arts Course', pp.16-17: booklists indicate that some of the most widely read ancient historians included Livy, Caesar and Sallust.

⁵⁴ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, p.81.

⁵⁵ Spitz, 'Humanism Protestant Reformation', p.398.

⁵⁶ *Reassessing Humanism*, p.11.

⁵⁷ Grant, *Vita*, para.22.

⁵⁸ The work took an epistolary form, a letter written to John Astley in response to his request for a summary of Ascham's travels to Germany with Morison. Though it charted recent events, Ascham very much conceived of it as 'history' (see below).

⁵⁹ (L) G:vol.1, 153/H:140, 1553. Sturm cannot have known that Ascham had already by this time written up a good part of his *Report*.

⁶⁰ W.F. Staton, 'Roger Ascham's Theory of History Writing', *Studies in Philology*, 56, 2 (1959), p.126.

in the construction of the idea of Protestant nations.⁶¹ It has also been argued that humanist historicism fed directly into the Protestant concept of providence.⁶² Church history was also deployed in attacks upon the institution of the papacy, like Valla's challenge to the Donation of Constantine. In general though, the use made of history by Protestants is often deemed to be a phenomenon of the later Reformation, as and when they realised that they needed to counter the conservatives' charges of innovation (such as 'where was your church before Luther?') and to create a past and present Church history of their own.⁶³ The overlap between history and theology is even less well documented, in part, as Maag perceptively notes, because of the assumed incompatibility between the *sola scriptura* principle and the case from history.⁶⁴

Ascham's *Apologia* can usefully augment the picture since his theological tract repeatedly used the historical perspective. From the outset of his work, Ascham fully insinuated history into his doctrinal arguments. He exuberantly declared his intention to 'piece together every historical account...right up to the present day' in order to understand the truth about this most holy and important of sacraments.⁶⁵ And he went on the attack, brandishing history as a weapon. One of his initial tactics was an *ad fontes* investigation of the origins of the Mass as a means to discredit it.⁶⁶ The fact that he saw the Mass, the theological cornerstone of the Catholic Church, as something that could be submitted to historical assessment was radical enough but, with deliberate irreverence, he proceeded to attribute it to a series of foreign imports effectively rendering it an historical aberration:

...the Devil has not made use of one century or one man for so great a matter...I think, however, that the origin of the Mass has derived in part from those sacrifices which wicked Jewish priests increased beyond due measure and established at Baal...I also think that a large part of the Mass has flowed forth from pagan nations into our religion.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Shrank, *Writing the Nation*, section on Leland, in particular.

⁶² A. Walsham, *Providence in early modern England* (Oxford and New York, 1999).

⁶³ Kess has pointed out how emerging Protestantism needed a new identity, the Schmalkadic League employing Sleidan to write an official version of the Protestant movement which was first published in 1555 (*Sleidan*, pp.1-2). Foxe's seminal *Acts and Monuments* was a further famous example of this.

⁶⁴ K.D. Maas, 'Scripture, History and Polemic in the Early English Reformation: The curious case of Robert Barnes', *Reformation Journal*, 14 (2009), p.79. Maas proceeds to show how Barnes did successfully bring the two together in his work on the Mass.

⁶⁵ *Apologia*, p.34.

⁶⁶ *Apologia*, pp.31-37.

⁶⁷ *Apologia*, pp.31-32.

He described in some detail the institution of the Mass in England by Augustine at the behest of Pope Gregory.⁶⁸ Throughout his historical assessment of the Mass, he contrasted its shameful history to the sanctity of the Apostles, Christ and Paul.

This aggressive historical approach was used by some of the most outspoken theological reformers of the Protestant Reformation. For example, Hooper, in response to a claim by Gardiner that the Mass has been celebrated in its current form for the last 1500 years, retorted with a lengthy and detailed argument from history.⁶⁹ He attributed the belief in transubstantiation to Pope Innocent III's *de officio missae*; asserted that masses essentially began to 'cum into estimacion when the order of [St] Benedict enlarged there cloisters in franunce'; and that it was then in 815 during the reign of Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne, that private masses were fully adopted by the people to the detriment of the communion. He added, by way of conclusion, that 'those that redith the histories and wrytinges of our elders knowith what byshopes of late days made this Mass'.⁷⁰ Gilby was another who traced the theological doctrine of transubstantiation through history in his Eucharistic work. He credited the medieval doctors with the invention of the term 'reality' and Peter Lombard with 'your transimutation and transaccidentation' which was then perpetuated in history by men like Pope Innocent and Thomas Aquinas.⁷¹ He undertook a similar exercise as regards the use of images in religious worship.⁷² Becon would also detail the history of papal decrees regarding the Eucharist, even citing dates, in order to trace the development of false worship.⁷³

Another very interesting dimension of Ascham's approach was his historical conception of language which sprang directly from his training in ancient languages and literature. A section of his *Apologia* comprised a historical and philological survey of the term 'Mass' through the centuries.⁷⁴ He began by claiming that the term *missa* was in origin a Syrian word 'used occasionally by the Jews, as a contribution of the people'. He then traced the application of the verb *mitto* (meaning 'I send'), with which *missa* is cognate, in different scenarios through time. He observed that the word was subsequently used by the Latins on

⁶⁸ *Apologia*, pp.34-35.

⁶⁹ Gardiner, *Devil's Sopistrie*, sigs.B4^v-B5^r; Hooper, *Answer*, sigs.S3^v and ff.

⁷⁰ Hooper, *Answer*, sigs.T3^r – V4^r.

⁷¹ Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.H6^v.

⁷² Gilby, *An Answer*, sig.H6^{r-v}.

⁷³ Becon, *Comparison of the Lord's Supper and the Mass*, ed., Ayre, p.360.

⁷⁴ *Apologia*, pp.35-37.

account of the *dimittendis Cathecumenis* ('the sending away of the Cathecumens') or the *dimittenda plebe cum res peracta est* ('the sending away of the people when the business had been completed'), referring at this point to Cicero's use of the term in this sense. His conclusion was clear that the verb did not and should not give rise to an interpretation that 'Christ having become a sacrifice by a priest is sent (*mittitur*) through some angel to the Father with the result that he intercedes on our behalf'.⁷⁵ The interest Ascham displayed at this point in the etymology of this Latin verb was very much a manifestation of his humanist training in philology and interest in history, yet it was also integral to his stance against the Mass sacrifice. His knowledge of the words in their classical historical context offered an alternative frame of reference and a more nuanced means of contextualization in accordance with which he could make a judgment about the legitimacy of certain theological doctrines.

Again, such an approach was not peculiar to Ascham, and was also deployed by humanists of conservative outlook. Richard Smith, a steadfast supporter of the Mass, had, a year earlier, tried to prove in his *Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass* that the names given to the Eucharist in times past bore witness to its divine origins and that the Mass had betokened, at different times and for different nations, a sacrifice. He too dwelt on etymology, observing that the word 'Mass' was derived from the Hebrew (*missah*) adding 'that which the Grekes do call *liturgiam*, the Latyns *oblationem* and we in Englyshe ...an oblation or els a sacrifice... Moreover *sacrificare* in Latin is to make sacrifice and a prest [sic. ie. priest] in Latin is called *sacrificus* because he maketh sacrifice by his presthood...'.⁷⁶ Though Smith's priority was to stress the historical continuity of the notion of sacrifice and Ascham's to refute it, both resorted to historical semantics and it is easy to see from the above examples how convincing a catalogue of words related in time and space could look when set out in full. The role of historical philology was not simply to lend a bit of gravity to a pre-existing theological position; it was inherent to the working out of that position: the historical contextualization of a word endorsed its doctrinal meaning.

It is evident, at least in respect of Ascham, that his familiarity with the ancient world provided a clearly delineated sense of history in accordance with which he was able to conduct his theological assessments. For example, he invoked the ancient writers Cicero and

⁷⁵ *Apologia*, p.35.

⁷⁶ fols.xix^r and xx^r.

Thucydides in order to show how various terms could bear different connotations at different times and again he targeted the Mass:

But you, think about the Mass, the thing itself, not in terms of the name which it once had, but in terms of the weight of the crimes which the Mass has now introduced. If the age of the name were to commend such depraved matters, the invading enemy may just as well be quietly received back into the Republic because, as Cicero teaches, the name of the enemy was acceptable among our elders. And why should we find fault with thieves and theft when once upon a time thieves and servile men were one and the same? In Thucydides, men are gently questioned as to whether they are thieves or merchants. But since the enemy and thieves have not only not stopped in the abuse of the name but have fallen into an obvious crime, albeit they are in possession of an old name, (however), they deserve new hatred among everyone.⁷⁷

In his critique of the Mass he also deployed Aristotle, an ancient thinker who, notwithstanding his teachings dominated medieval scholasticism, continued to be of considerable significance for a number of later humanists.⁷⁸ The cyclical historical framework he used to assess the Mass was based on the teachings of Aristotle and his the degenerative cycle of ‘genesis, use, misuse, corruption’.⁷⁹ Ascham had in fact already used the framework in his *Toxophilus* (of 1545) in respect of the historical development of archery.⁸⁰ It was a pattern that he had digested from his reading of an ancient author, but now it helped shape his understanding of theological doctrine – in this instance, the regression of the Mass over time through its gradual accretion of abuses.

It is even possible to read back into his *Apologia* insights Ascham evinced in his later *Report on Germany* about the influence the ancient world had on his conception of history, particularly in terms of its interaction with theology. In the preface to his *Report* he set out a historiographical methodology which discussed in detail, with direct reference to several ancient historians, including Livy, Polybius, Thucydides and Homer,⁸¹ the overall aims of his history. These ancient writers supplied the frames of reference within which he understood history to operate. So, for example, Livy taught that nothing false should be written, but rather, bold truths must be told. Polybius taught that history should serve as lessons in justice, wisdom and vigilance, whilst the histories of Thucydides and Homer were diligent

⁷⁷ *Apologia*, pp.36-7.

⁷⁸ It is clear from the correspondence between Ascham and Sturm that both had a high degree of interest in and respect for Aristotle. Melancthon too, for example, edited Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Dialectic* in 1519 and 1520 respectively.

⁷⁹ *Apologia*, pp.31 and 37-8. Aristotle's *Peri Geneseōs kai phthoras* (*De Generatione et Corruptione*) in which he posits the notion of the four causes.

⁸⁰ *Toxophilus*, G:vol 2, pp.18, 24 and 38 respectively. Like here, this was applied as part of a determination of origins, this time in respect of archery (pp.18-19).

⁸¹ Homer was of course an epic poet, but the historical value of his work is also widely accepted.

recorders of the inward disposition of the mind.⁸² Truth, wisdom and the inward mind; these were significant and serious objectives and they invested the historical method with a gravity not at all out of place in the theological sphere. In placing the doctrine of the Mass under the spotlight of history in his *Apologia*, he had, in effect, submitted it to the highest form of theological judgement.

Both in terms of the value placed on the unification of history and theology and its classically-inspired approach, Ascham had much in common with certain Protestant reformers in Germany. Melanchthon repeatedly stated that knowledge of history was an absolute necessity to all men.⁸³ Early in his career he had used his opening lecture at the University of Wittenburg in 1518 to underline the importance of history, portraying it, as Cicero had, as the teacher of life.⁸⁴ He would himself embark on a number of historical projects including a *Famous and Godly History containing the Lives and Actes of Luther, Oecolampadius and Zwingli* (co-authored by, *inter alia*, Gryneus and Capito) and the revision of a world history from the ancient world (including the history of Greece and Rome) up to Charles V, in the *Chronicon Carionis* (1558/60).⁸⁵ In his preface to the *Chronicon*, Melanchthon explained at length his view of history. Making explicit his admiration of the ancient authors who valued history's capacity for teaching about both past and future, he would also draw on classical approaches throughout the work.⁸⁶ Melanchthon would quote Thucydides to illustrate that human nature is always the same and similar things will happen.⁸⁷ The moralizing historical template of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* was an important influence and interwoven into the redemptive narrative; Xenophon's focus on emancipation from tyranny and the virtues of an educated ruler seemed to inform Melanchthon's depiction of the theological struggles through the ages.⁸⁸ As several historians of Melanchthon have observed, history was inseparable from his theological activities: Melanchthon's Scriptural commentaries were wholly underpinned by his sense of history; and history was, for him, one

⁸² *Report*, G:vol 3, pp.5-6. It has been pointed out that Ascham's programmatic set of aims bears in turn considerable similarity to a speech made by Mark Antony in Cicero's *De Oratore*: Ryan, *Ascham*, p.164; and Pincombe suggests that the political philosophy of the *Report* was clearly based on Cicero's teachings in the *De Officiis*: *Elizabethan Humanism*, pp.70-1.

⁸³ I.D. Backus, *Historical Method and confessional identity in the era of the Reformation, 1378-1615* (Leiden and Boston, 2003), p.329.

⁸⁴ Kess, *Sleidan*, p.130.

⁸⁵ Ascham referred to the latter in his *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, p.207.

⁸⁶ P. Melanchthon, *Chronicon Carionis expositum et auctum multis et veteribus et recentibus historiis....usque ad Carolum Quintum Imperatorem* (Geneva, 1581); Kess, *Sleidan*, p.131.

⁸⁷ K. van Liere, S. Ditchfield, H. Louthan (eds.) *Sacred History: uses of the Christian past in the Renaissance World* (Oxford, 2012), p.43.

⁸⁸ *Chronicon Carionis*, book 2.

of the main tools of communication between God and man.⁸⁹ Of similar interest is Ben Tov's study on the role of the humanist interest in Greek antiquity in shaping the Lutheran worldview. He highlights the potential for a highly confessionalised humanist interest in antiquity and, furthermore, the extent to which study of the ancient world prepared Melancthon for Luther's doctrine.⁹⁰

Sleidan, an important Protestant reformer in Strasbourg with whom Ascham forged a connection, was another who would combine humanist history and theology. As the officially appointed historian of the Schmalkaldic League, he composed two major historical works – his *Commentaries on Religion and the Republic in the Reign of Charles V* (of 1555) and his slightly later universal '*Four Empires*' *History*.⁹¹ These were entirely Protestant (and, more particularly, Lutheran) in their outlook and make-up.⁹² Like Ascham, his knowledge of the ancient world played a role in organisation of history and his comprehension of its general aims. It is possible that Sleidan's *Commentaries* were modelled on the title of Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*.⁹³ In Sleidan's works, a considerable number of Roman and Greek historians were mentioned and classical models incorporated. For example, in the dedication of his Latin translation of the French historian Commynes, Sleidan would praise the outstanding achievements of Julius Caesar who, he claimed, was to be admired and imitated for his adherence to the truth.⁹⁴ In his dedication to the *Commentaries*, he referred to Charles V as belonging to the same mould of man as Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar and Constantine.⁹⁵ His apology which prefaced his second edition of the *Commentaries* was especially interesting for its description of history's ultimate purpose: 'the principal law and ornament of history' was, he argued, 'truth and sincerity'.⁹⁶ Like Ascham, he expressed his gratitude to the ancient writer, Cicero, for providing an example to emulate in this respect; Cicero, he explained, understood history to be 'the witness of times, the light of truth, the life of memory and the mistress of life. By these words the great orator hath

⁸⁹ Kusukawa, 'Melancthon', p.63; Kess, *Sleidan*, p.131.

⁹⁰ A. Ben Tov, *Lutheran Humanists and Greek Antiquity: Melancthonian Scholarship between Universal History and Pedagogy* (Leiden and Boston, 2009).

⁹¹ It is interesting that Ascham's *Report*, which covered much of the same material and period as that of Sleidan's, anticipated him by two years.

⁹² Kess, *Sleidan*, pp.50 and 84.

⁹³ Kess, *Sleidan*, p.60

⁹⁴ Kess, *Sleidan*, pp.40 and 60.

⁹⁵ J. Sleidan, *Commentaries*, trans. as *A General History of the Reformation of the Church: From the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome begun in Germany by Luther with the progress thereof in all parts of Christendom 1517-1556 (and a continuation to Council of Trent 1562)*, 'Englished' by Edmund Bohun (1689, London).

⁹⁶ Sleidan, *A General History of the Reformation*.

given a noble commendation of history and an excellent description of what ought to be aim'd at in the composing of it'.

The humanist discipline of history, as far as Ascham and other theological reformers were concerned, was central to their religious understanding. It could be used alongside Scripture in the verification of doctrine and appreciation of its development. Knowledge of classical historians and the events of the ancient world offered new time-lines and ways of measuring theological legitimacy, and opened up different ways of articulating religious ideas. Imbued with the ideological aims of the ancient historians, the historical perspective became totally intertwined with the process of reform and renewal.

5.3.2 Classical Authors

Perhaps the area we most obviously associate with humanism is classical literature.

The Renaissance, which made available classical authors and genres to a degree unparalleled since the Greek and Roman eras, is often said to have given birth to the humanist movement. During the early modern period, study of classical authors was actively encouraged by rulers across Europe. University Arts courses became increasingly dominated by the ancient authors.⁹⁷ That the events of the Reformation were bound up at every level with acts of literature and with the practice of literary culture has been fully acknowledged.⁹⁸ Certainly in respect of the early Reformation, there exists a large body of scholarship which deals with the efforts of humanists to combine the best of classical literature with Christianity.⁹⁹ One of the main aims of Erasmus's *Enchiridion*, for example, was to prove the compatability of pagan sources and Christianity. Erasmus's *Antibarbari* elevated the ancient comedians and the writers Virgil, Horace and Cicero, and identified a Christian spirit that ran through them. His *Ciceronianus* maintained that it was not impossible to be both a Christian and a Ciceronian. There is, however, considerably less coverage in historical analysis of the continued incorporation of the substance and spirit of those same classical texts into the theology of reformed writing going into the next phase of the Reformation.

⁹⁷ Jardine, 'Humanism Cambridge Arts Course'. Cambridge University booklists and inventories certainly reveal a marked growth in ownership of classical texts: Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories*; M.H. Smith, 'Some Humanist Libraries in Early Tudor Cambridge', *S.C.J.*, 5, 1 (1974), pp.15-34.

⁹⁸ Cummings, *Literary Culture Reformation*, p.5.

⁹⁹ In historiographical terms, the focus has primarily been Erasmus: R.L. de Molen, *Essays on the Works of Erasmus* (New Haven, 1978); E. Rummel, *Erasmus as Translator of the Classics* (Toronto, 1985); McConica, *Humanists*, Dowling, *Humanism*; Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*; and L.E. Halkin, *Erasmus: A Critical Biography*, trans. J. Tonkin (Cambridge Mass. and Oxford, 1993), chapter 25.

Ascham was an individual who was steeped in classical literature. The extent of his classical reading has been painstakingly computed in an unpublished dissertation by Noyes who calculates that in his works, Ascham cited 230 classical authors.¹⁰⁰ As a student and teacher at Cambridge, he specialised in classical authors, and there is plenty of evidence that his enthusiasm for and knowledge of classical literature endured throughout his life. He himself attested to the sense in which the study of the literature of the ancients was a part of his fundamental being: as he wrote in his *Report* concerning a Greek verse of Euripides, it was not the case of it simply ‘sounding well’ but ‘also sinking into the heart’.¹⁰¹

The *Apologia* was an excellent demonstration of the extent to which a full internalisation of classical literature was transposed onto his theological critique of the Eucharist. Classical literature was, for instance, of considerable assistance in the exposure of theological error. Ascham’s knowledge of a sacrifice in Greek tragedy, one particularly unusual and shocking even by ancient standards, the sacrifice of a girl, Polyxena, at the end of the Trojan Wars, helped to illuminate the grotesque travesty of the sacrifice in the Mass. But the function of Ascham’s classical reference seemed to go beyond rhetorical effect. The details in the Greek text, such as the holding up of the cup and the subsequent worship, seemed to tally exactly with the ritual of the Mass, thereby cementing the connection between the two and reinforcing in Ascham’s mind the impiety of each:

For truly, as regards the defence of the sacrificial Mass, I can say this in all honesty, that it is not so much able to be gathered from the whole of Scripture as from the first tragedy of Euripides in which these are the words of a certain sacrificer: ... Having taken a gold cup in his hands, he said ‘My Father, receive these placatory sacrifices which draw forth the dead’ and the whole crowd present worshipped....¹⁰²

Ascham’s intimate knowledge of this Greek play had led him to classify the Mass as a pagan rather than a Christian rite.¹⁰³

Ancient literary paradigms played a similarly important role in his theological rejection of the sacerdotal priesthood. At one point in his *Apologia*, he set out a typology about the weakness of citizens in confronting enemies of the State as posited by the ancient Greek orator Isocrates (*Against Archidamus*). This he then applied directly to the misguided acquiescence

¹⁰⁰ Noyes, ‘A Study Roger Ascham Classics’.

¹⁰¹ *Report*, G:vol.2, p.47.

¹⁰² *Apologia*, pp.32-33.

¹⁰³ D.K. Shuger, *Renaissance Bible: scholarship, sacrifice and subjectivity* (Texas and Edinburgh, 2010), chapter 4 which explores examples of the overlaps between sacrifice and tragedy in sixteenth century Biblical scholarship.

by the populace in the licence of the priesthood:

Isocrates, a learned and sagacious writer, shows that there are three types of men more useful to the enemy than to the State: first, those who advance the business of the enemy with their own words; then, those who resist not bravely and courageously enough, but weakly and feebly; and finally, those who are silent and say nothing against them. And through the crime of men of this sort in these times, the crimes not only of the priests but of the Roman religion are of the greatest import either because they have been greatly fortified for their defence or because they have been barely mentioned with the design of excusing them or because they have been altogether passed by, for a more unimpeded course.¹⁰⁴

He further likened the old priesthood to the Gods of Homer and utilised the Platonic opposition of shadows and reality to expose the external priesthood and the priestly sacrifice.¹⁰⁵ In so doing, Ascham was allowing ancient delineations of myth, truth, delusion and fiction to have a bearing on a theological debate about salvation. Literature had become an important theological discourse.

Others too were using classical literature in their theological assessments of the the Eucharist. Hutchinson's knowledge of the Greek philosopher Socrates (as described in Plato) helped him reach the conclusion that the rituals of kneeling, elevation and enclosure of the host in the pyx in the Mass ceremony were extra-Scriptural: 'Socrates was a heathen and no Christian, yet a learned and great famous clerk held this assertion that every God is to be honoured and worshipped after such a manner and with such rites and ceremonies as he himself teaches and commandeth'.¹⁰⁶ Gilby's knowledge of Livy and other ancient historians and their descriptions of prodigies and portents contributed to his denigration of the Mass as a miracle akin to those of the pre-Christian age: '...prophane histories do tell us of an hundred strange wonders wrought by the devil: Livius sayeth that bloude dyd flowe out of the thombe of the Image of Jupiter...[and that] it rained fleshe at Rome....but what needeth us to seeke for olde lyes and fained miracles?'.¹⁰⁷ Becon likened the procession of the sacramental bread in the Mass service to 'a puppet of that thrasonical, boasting and glorious knight' as depicted in an ancient Roman comedy by Terence and used an aphorism from the Greek writer, Menander, 'Gold openeth all things, yea, the very gates of hell' to underscore his abhorrence of the financial avarice of the sacrificing mass-mongers.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ *Apologia*, p.67.

¹⁰⁵ *Apologia*, pp.106 and 132. He does not expressly mention Plato at this point.

¹⁰⁶ *Faithful Declaration*, ed., Bruce, pp.253-4.

¹⁰⁷ *An Answer*, sig.Oi^v.

¹⁰⁸ Becon, *A Comparison Supper and Mass*, ed., Ayre, pp.374 and 365.

Nor were the ideas and paradigms of classical literature being utilised solely in a negative way. Classical authors could enhance one's understanding of theological concepts and were consequently being deployed as authorities in their own right in important doctrinal debates. A classical author helped to shape Ascham's understanding of the sacrifice of the Eucharist, for instance. As part of his argument about the abstract nature of the sacrifice that all Christians must undertake in the sacrament, he cited, in parallel with Psalm 58, Isaiah and St Paul, the ancient rhetorician Isocrates.¹⁰⁹ He expressly drew attention to 'a most pleasing notion' in Isocrates 'which can be regarded as having been taken not from the workshop of teachers of rhetoric but from the school of Isaiah'.¹¹⁰ And he quoted Isocrates: 'These are his words: "Consider that this is the best sacrifice and the highest form of veneration of God, if you show yourself to be a very good man and a very just one; for hope is more assured for the sort of men who intend to follow the good, whatever it be, from God than those who make numerous sacrifices and slay countless victims"'.¹¹¹ This ancient Greek orator not only inspired and reinforced Ascham's conception of a Christian sacrifice as one of attitude and the mind, but served too as an authoritative arbiter in this hotly contested theological debate.

In a similar way, classical literature endorsed theological positions in Hooper's Eucharistic work. For instance, he pointed to a number of characters from Greek literature to help elucidate the importance of Church discipline. He compared discipline in Church to that in a commonwealth, citing as an example the punishment and excommunication of evil-doers such as Orestes, Peleus and Antilochus by 'grekes and Etnyckis'.¹¹² He added with a certain admiration: 'These thinges were usid of antiquite that men shuld the more depely think upon the greatnys of godes displeasure...the gentiles that never knew god, kepe the religion of these ydoles and revengyd the transgression and violacion thereof better then the Christianes'.¹¹³ Hutchinson would rely on Cicero in his attempt to define the term 'nature' in respect of the bread and wine of the sacrament. Arguing that the nature of the bread and wine

¹⁰⁹ *Apologia*, pp.85-86.

¹¹⁰ *Apologia*, p.86.

¹¹¹ *Apologia*, p.86.

¹¹² Hooper, *Answer*, sig.N3^r. Orestes's exile (for the murder of his mother) was referred to in plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Peleus, having killed his half-brother, was forced to flee (Apollonius, *Argonautica*). As regards Antilochus, I assume Hooper had in mind his death at Troy, having been one of the suitors of Helen and gone to fight in the Trojan War, as recounted in Homer.

¹¹³ Hooper, *Answer*, sig.N3^r.

remain materially the same, he averred ‘approved writers do use it in this acception and signification as Marcus Tullius in his book *De somnio Scipionis*....’¹¹⁴

Such was the confidence that some reformers had in the potential correspondence between ancient literature and theological veracity that certain classical authors were considered by some as useful aids even in Scriptural interpretation. As part of Ascham’s extensive examination of the Scriptural basis for Mass sacrifice, he surveyed the New Testament use of the Greek word *leitourgia* (‘service’). His denial that this term encompassed the concept of the Mass sacrifice was corroborated using two classical orators, Isocrates and Demosthenes:

This word [*leitourgia*, meaning ‘service’] is applied in the State, just as in that *On the Peace* of Isocrates: ‘You consider that those who dole out public revenues more democratic than those who perform *leitourgia* at their own expense’. And so at one time *leitourgia* had an appropriate place in the State with the result that those who applied that name to religion did not avoid the censure of Demosthenes. He spoke against Leptines as follows: ‘Now that to have exemption from religious duties and *leitourgia* is not the same thing but indeed these men are trying to deceive you by transferring the name of *leitourgia* to sacrifices I will provide Leptines himself as a witness for you’.¹¹⁵

Cicero, in particular, was deemed of great assistance in the process of Biblical exegesis.

Hooper would frequently defer to his authority, quoting him in support of a certain approach to Biblical interpretation: ‘A man may not take the letter [ie of the Bible] with out the sense in a mater of wayght. Cicero the etnick so willeth: *semper autem in fide quid senseris, non quid dixeris cogitandum* 1.lib.off.’¹¹⁶ Earlier episodes in Ascham’s life demonstrate well his readiness to be guided by Cicero in exegesis. For example, in his letter of 1542 to Seton enclosing his Oecumenius Commentaries, Ascham carefully explained that whilst he had followed Erasmus in every other respect, he employed, ‘somewhat daringly’ (to use his own words), the verb *deprecor* instead of *rogo*, ‘having the great Marcus Tullius Cicero for my authority’.¹¹⁷ Ascham explained that the verb *deprecor* unlike *rogo* (used by Erasmus in his Greek Testament) contained the additional connotation of not denying our deed and expressly asking for forgiveness for a transgression. The verb related to a form of supplication that Paul made to Philemon and was integral to the nature of reconciliation Paul hoped to effect between Philemon and his slave Onesimus. In the context of the Reformation, the concept of

¹¹⁴ Hutchinson, *Faithful Declaration*, ed., Bruce, p.278.

¹¹⁵ *Apologia*, pp.92-93.

¹¹⁶ *An Answer*, sig. I4^r. Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.13; the phrase is used proverbially and commonly translated as ‘a promise must be kept not merely in the letter, but also in the spirit’.

¹¹⁷ Epistle to Philemon, verses 9 and 10. Letter to Seton (L) G:vol.1, 11/H:12, 1542. The Vulgate has *obsecro*. As Hatch observes, Ascham here has in mind here not a specific passage but Cicero’s general usage.

reconciliation was highly pertinent to the obtaining of Christian grace or justification. Ascham in his preference for a verb which seemed more in harmony with a key Protestant belief that man could not of his own doing secure God's reconciliation had here been guided by a classical Latin writer. In Ascham's *Apologia* too, there was evidence that Ascham considered Ciceronian Latin vocabulary to be a fitting medium for his Biblical quotes, often, it appears, making a deliberate choice to use this over the more obvious (and surely well-known) Latin of the Vulgate or Erasmus. For example, when quoting Matthew 13:19, 'Everyone who hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, comes that vile one ...', Ascham made a point of selecting the very Ciceronian adjective *nequam* for the word 'vile' over the epithet *malus* used (as he must have known) in the Vulgate and Erasmus.¹¹⁸

Though broaching the issue of Biblical authority and sanctity from the opposite direction, Smith in his *Defence and Assertion* relied not on Cicero but another ancient writer, Ovid, to criticise Scriptural disputations and insist upon the infallibility of canons and rules: 'The excellent poet Ovid knowing by experience what sufferance doth where insolency is not bridled saith: *principiis obsta, sero medicina paratur cum mala per longas convaluere moras* (the Latin means: stop it at the beginning; a cure is attempted too late when, through long delay, the illness has gained strength)'.¹¹⁹ Later in the same tract when warning against the folly of searching out the reason for the mysteries of the sacrament, he held up the disciples of Pythagoras as an exemplar 'who gave such honour and credence to his [viz. Pythagoras'] sayings, proving, it was enough to say - *autos epha* (Greek for 'he himself spoke') - they took what he said sufficiently and as true. Pythagoras was but a philosopher and a man only but had such faith and credite given unto him of his scholars touching his doctrine'.¹²⁰ Men whose business it was to promote a certain theological position, based on their interpretation of Scripture and/or the authority of the Church, appeared very comfortable with the incorporation of classical authors into their arguments.

The humanist tendency to marry the thought of the ancient pagans and Christian teaching did not, as is often assumed to be the case, disappear as the emphasis on theological reform became greater, but continued and flourished. Such ambitions were also shared by one of the

¹¹⁸ *Apologia*, p.55.

¹¹⁹ *Assertion and Defence of Sacrament of the Altar*, sig.B2^v.

¹²⁰ *Assertion and Defence of Sacrament of the Altar*, sig.F2^f.

most well-known reformers, Melanchthon. He wrote eulogies on the classical authors and constantly explored the possibility of a full incorporation of pagan disciplines and values and classical education into Protestantism.¹²¹ Peter Martyr Vermigli, who would play such a central role in the Oxford Disputations on the Eucharist in 1549, also drew on a wide range of classical Greek and Roman authors. They were not used for mere ornamentation in his tract, but served him as sources for explaining the text of the Bible.¹²² Joachim Camerarius, a man whom Ascham would be acquainted with in Germany, was another who seamlessly combined classical literature with active theological reform: a former pupil of Melanchthon, he would go on to edit and translate works of numerous classical (mostly Greek) authors; in parallel with these, he embarked on a biography of Melanchthon and played a role in the drafting of the Augsburg Confession.¹²³

That Ascham felt that he belonged to a wider network of like-minded men in this respect is perhaps reflected in his careful mark-up and deliberate underlining of the introduction to his edition of Aristophanes' plays in Greek, written by the European reformer Simon Grynaeus who made it clear that 'sacred and profane' literature could co-exist and that 'the light of the poet ... turns the mind of a boy to the superior sense and example of Scripture; thus he will not comprehend vices, but virtue and will render it all the more bright'.¹²⁴ The authors of Greece and Rome which formed the bedrock of University courses across Europe and England were not studied without reference to religious concerns. These authors exerted a powerful influence on the way people thought and negotiated a climate of theological flux and controversy. Lessons and models from ancient texts were selected and used in the determination of theological rights and wrongs. They were also accorded a high status for their ability to shed light on theological truths and the most hallowed of theological texts, the Bible itself.

5.3.3 Greek

In assessments of the Reformation there already exists a good appreciation of the ways Greek engaged with theology. Historians observe that it was central to the *ad fontes* impetus which

¹²¹ D. Buzogany, 'Melanchthon as a Humanist and a Reformer' in Maag, *Melanchthon*, p.87.

¹²² E. Campi, 'Genesis Commentary: Interpreting Genesis' in T.Kirby, E. Campi and F.James (eds.), *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Leiden and Boston, 2009), p.215.

¹²³ J.E. Carney (ed.), *Renaissance and Reformation, 1500-1620: a biographical dictionary* (London, 2001), pp.62-63.

¹²⁴ Ascham's annotations on Aristophanes held at Hatfield House (archive number 7923). The translation of this introduction is mine.

held that theological sources be read in their original language. By extension, they also acknowledge the fact that insistence on linguistic purity was inevitably bound up with the purification of religion.¹²⁵ Erasmus's production of a New Testament based on the original Greek of 1516 is frequently held up as a prime example: it not only served to rival and seriously call into question the Latin Vulgate version which had, in many ways, come to define the Catholic Church, but it showed how single Greek phrases could overturn long-established Catholic theology, such as the sacrament of penance.¹²⁶ What I intend to focus on in this section is not just Greek's continued capacity for challenging hallowed Catholic truths, but its genuine revolutionary force at a time when Greek scholars were a relative novelty and even well-educated people usually had no knowledge of Greek.¹²⁷ In part on account of its newness, Greek also had the potential to be a deeply subversive language. The New Testament in Greek was, in the early sixteenth century, nothing short of a 'power text'; it brought with it certitude, but also unpredictability, and its effect would continue to be inflammatory. For this reason too, Greek was a language that came to be invested with a religious sanctity of its own.

Even as late as 1500 Greek was not part of the curriculum at either Oxford or Cambridge. It was a subject subsequently promoted particularly at St John's College, Fisher's statutes of 1516 blazing the trail. As outlined in chapter 1, Ascham was one of a few experts in Greek in the country. It would be his chief ally when going into battle with the Mass in his *Apologia*. Like Erasmus, Ascham's careful examination of the Greek words of Scripture challenged in a brutal way the foundations of centuries old theological doctrines.¹²⁸ At the same time, it allowed him to come to his own conclusions about the precise theological nature of the sacrament. A considerable portion of the *Apologia* comprised a philological assessment of the sacramental sacrifice. In his review of the Greek term *thusia* ('sacrifice'), Ascham concluded that the priestly sacrifice was erroneous and that the term was intended in Scripture to have a considerably broader application:

¹²⁵ P. Burke, *Languages and communities in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2004).

¹²⁶ According to the Greek original, John the Baptist in the wilderness had said to the people *metanoete*. The Latin Vulgate had translated this as 'Do penance' on the basis of which a whole elaborate theology of a sacrament called penance had been constructed. Erasmus instead argued that the Greek verb meant not so much 'do penance' as 'repent/feel regret' with an emphasis on personal agency.

¹²⁷ No complete Greek text was published in England until 1543, this being Cheke's *Ioannis Chrysostomi Homiliae Duae*: Dowling, *Humanism Henry VIII*, p.2; Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to Humanities*, p.110. Smith observes that the majority of Greek texts were represented only in Latin: 'Humanist libraries in Cambridge', p.24.

¹²⁸ See chapter 3.

Is the Greek *thusia* that sacrifice which our priests are desirous to have dominion over alone separate from other men?....All Christians deny it with two of the most distinguished witnesses, Paul and Peter. In Paul: 'I beseech you, brethren, to present your bodies as a living *thusia*' [*Romans 12*] and very clearly in his Epistle to the Hebrews, 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such *thusias* God is well pleased' [*Hebrews 13*]. And in Peter '...a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual *thusias*'. [*Peter 1.2*] The Jews and the Gentiles have no word which is more common than *thusia*. Therefore this word extends more widely and applies to more things than to accommodate only the private sacrifice of the priests.¹²⁹

His conception of the sacrifice of the sacrament, which he now understood as something spiritual, abstract and inclusive, had been fundamentally shaped by his analysis of the Greek terms of Scripture.

There was a similar outcome regarding his analysis of the Greek that related to the priestly administration of the sacrifice, namely the terms *oikonomia* and *oikonomos*. But this time, in addition to exploring the meanings intended by Paul, Ascham had used his own understanding of the Greek term *oikonomos* which denoted, according to the ancient Greeks, the manager of the house, usually a slave, and applied it to the minister in the sacrament:

The term *oikonomia* ('administration of the household') signifies the faithful care of distributing to many, not the private opportunity of making separate sacrifices for others. If our priests had wished to be faithful dispensers ..., they would not have devised a new rite of making separate sacrifices, but, in waiting for others, they would have observed the communion of the supper as expounded in Scripture.¹³⁰

His understanding of the essential meaning of a Greek word in its original classical context had enabled him to elaborate, with complete confidence, on Paul's simple exhortation for 'faithful dispensation' and place his own stress on the qualities of serving others. These nuances brought a new layer of interpretation to the function of a priest. There was no sense in which Ascham's use of Greek was superficial or peripheral – it was central to the theological process. The observation made by Giles, that 'as Ascham became a Grecian, he became at heart a Protestant' should perhaps be taken more seriously.¹³¹

In using Greek philology in the context of the Eucharist Ascham was relatively unusual and it was a skill exhibited in very few such tracts in the 1540s. It did inform the Eucharistic work of Gilby, a man who whilst at Cambridge had won a reputation for his mastery of the ancient languages, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. In his tract, which was a direct rebuff to Gardiner,

¹²⁹ *Apologia*, pp.90-91.

¹³⁰ *Apologia*, p.97.

¹³¹ G:vol.1, p.xiii.

Greek would play a similarly important role, for example, in the elucidation of a point of doctrine concerning 1 Corinthians 11:29. In response to Gardiner's argument that Paul's words *non diiudicans corpus Domini* ('not discerning the Lord's body') supported the real presence, Gilby relied on his training in Greek to confirm not only that Gardiner was wrong but his own convictions about the spiritual nature of the sacrament:

But to returne to the wordes *non diiudicans* etc. Your English text is making no difference of the Lordes body. But your owne interpretation is 'not understanding', 'not considering'. But if you will adde thereunto the signification of the Greke worde ('not judging'), I wyl say al is true and agreeth very wel. For whosoever doeth eate this bread and drinke this cup unworthily eateth his owne judgement, making no difference, not understanding, considering or judging the Lordes body. Where he that doeth eate it worthily, doeth by his faith eate the very body of the Lorde.¹³²

In fact, for Gilby, Hebrew philology played an even more pivotal role in the formulation of doctrine than that of Greek, the Greek being very much predicated on the Hebrew. For example, he argued that the Hebrew word *שמח* (*simchu*, literally 'happy') translated into the Greek as *εὐλογηθεῖτε* (*eulogetheĩte* 'you praise').¹³³ This both reinforced a doctrinal point about the nature of the sacrifice as one of 'reverent thanks gyvyng' and created a direct nexus between the Old Testament and the communion of the New Testament:

Thus we therefore have, by the healpe of the Hebrue tonge and the olde testament, furth [ie. first] of the whiche two all rites and ceremonies and the trueth of al the principal parts of the newe testament have both their confirmation and declaration,...proved unto you first that in this sacrament there muste be a general profession of oure fayth in the death of Christ outwardly and then privately everyone must in hert acknowledge and give thanks.¹³⁴

Gilby's use of Hebrew philology provided important messages that could apply equally to anyone using Greek philology. He had shown firstly the extent to which linguistic scrutiny of the Bible could clarify individual points of doctrine and secondly the degree to which the return to the original language of the Bible could spawn new theological emphases, such as, in this case, the importance of the Old Testament's pre-figuring.

Hutchinson was another whose knowledge of Greek had a significant bearing on his interpretation of Eucharistic theology. In one of his Eucharistic sermons, he presented a dispute about the validity of making a sign of the cross in the sacrament as one capable of being determined by Greek hermenutics. Hutchinson denied that Mark 14:22 or Paul's

¹³² *An Answer*, sig.R6^v.

¹³³ *An Answer*, sig.R5^f.

¹³⁴ *An Answer*, sig.R5^f.

statement in 1 Corinthians 10:16 could support the crossing because ‘The Greke worde in these two textes which they alledge for their crossing is εὐλογεῖν (*eulogēin*)...which word I saye cannot signifie to make a signe of the cross. For the Grekes never used it in such signification....’¹³⁵

Greek philology was also a feature of the Eucharist work of Peter Martyr Vermigli, published in England during Edward’s reign.¹³⁶ In his work, which was composed after the Oxford disputations on the Lord’s Supper of 1549, he referred a number of times to the precise meaning of Greek words in a way which revealed an intimate connection between philology and theological conviction. For example, the Greek term ‘eucharist’ meaning ‘thanksgiving’ was absolutely central to his conception of the sacrament, the very title page of his work referring to the word twice.¹³⁷ He also developed a robust reponse to the theological position on Christ’s ubiquity with direct reference to a Greek participle (using Ephesians 1:23):

For there it is not signified ne ment that the bodye of Christe filleth all thynges, and is in all places as they doe bryng in and conclude vpon it. But because the significacion of this Greke word or participle πληρωμένου (*plērōmenou*) (‘filling’)¹³⁸ is indifferente to bee taken twoo manier of wayes, (for it is a verbe common (as the Gramarians call it,) that is to say, of suche nature, that it may signifye eyther dooyng or sufferyng (as ye lust.) For ye maye chose whether ye will take it and Englishe it, fillyng, or els beyng fylled: If ye Englishe it, beyng fylled: than shall the sense and menyng of it bee, that Christe beeyng the heade of the churche, is in his membres made full and perfect in all poyntes....¹³⁹

The humanist discipline of Greek philology was considerably more than a useful tool. Philology was a skill that was inherently bound up with the relationship between language and meaning, truth and error, and it cut straight to the heart of theological analysis. As such, it had tremendous ideological value: the humanist quest for verbal precision and semantic

¹³⁵ *Faithful Declaration*, ed. Bruce, p.226.

¹³⁶ *Tractatio de sacramento Eucharistiae habita in celeberrima vniuersitate Oxoniensi in Anglia* (London, 1549), published in English the year later in *A discourse or traictise of Petur Martyr Vermilla Flore[n]tine, the publyque reader of diuinitee in the Vniuersitee of Oxford wherein he openly declared his whole and determinate iudgemente concernynge the sacrament of the Lordes supper* (London, 1550), (STC 24665) (I use this to quote from). There is also a modern translation and commentary: *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist, 1549, Peter Martyr Vermigli* trans. and ed., J.C. McLelland (Kirkville, 2000).

¹³⁷ This was one reason that Vermigli put so much emphasis on the Eucharistic prayer which contained the idea of a sacrifice of thanksgiving and which, in turn, helped to influence the shape of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer: D. Fuller, ‘Sacrifice and Sacrament: Another Eucharistic Contribution from Peter Martyr Vermigli’ in F.A. James (ed.), *Peter Martyr Vermigli and the European Reformations: semper reformanda* (Leiden, 2004), p.236.

¹³⁸ The full wording of the relevant part of this verse was to *plērōma tou panta en pasi plērōmenou* (‘the fullness of him that filleth all in all’).

¹³⁹ *A discourse or traictise of Petur Martyr*, fol.xcvi.

contextualization was essentially about knowledge and truth.¹⁴⁰ As Ascham himself declared in his *Apologia*, ‘I am compelled to intersperse Latin with Greek, something I am reluctant to do and am accustomed to do very infrequently. But I do this now, not so that I can show off with Greek words, but so that I can show the truth with their light’.¹⁴¹ The abundant references in Ascham’s Greek analysis to ‘signification’ were inextricably bound up with the act of knowing. Signification brought with it proof and certainty as reflected in the following quotes from the *Apologia*: ‘And even *prosphora* (offering) of Christ and of all Christians nowhere signifies the private sacrifice of our priest’; and ‘*Dōron* (gift) has no proper place in the sacrifice...it is more useful to Gentiles and Jews than to Christ and Christians when it signifies a sacrifice’.¹⁴² In many ways, to do philology, was to do theology.

For these reasons, the Greek language seemed to convey theological gravity. Doctrine that had been sanctioned by the original Greek was accorded a status of a different order. Appreciation of its importance was one reason for the extreme reaction to Gardiner’s *Devil’s Sophistrie* by Protestants like Gilby. Gardiner had quoted at some length the Greek of John of Damascus who defended images and Gregory Nazianzus who upheld the notion of transmutation in the sacrament.¹⁴³ For Gardiner, the theological precepts enshrined in the Greek text of these Catholic doctors not only vindicated his own stance but served to validate the Church’s close bond with Greek. The time and effort spent in the corresponding rebuttals by Gilby on precisely these Greek quotes and Gardiner’s understanding of them was considerable: Gilby actually had a subheading dedicated to ‘the answeare to Doctour Damascen whom Wynchester rehearseth in greke’ referring to him as Gardiner’s ‘chiefe wytnes’.¹⁴⁴ The battleground that revolved around these Greek quotes reflected the high stakes involved in knowing this language.

There can be no doubt that language had a profound ideological significance. For some, especially those in Cambridge, knowledge of the original Biblical languages was considered to be the only means to gain a full understanding of God’s message. As Gilby wrote in his

¹⁴⁰ This is an area which has attracted growing interest from historians of the Renaissance and Reformation: R. Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance* (Princeton and Guildford, 1987); L. Nauta (ed.), *Language and Cultural Change: aspects of study and use of language in the Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Leuven and Dudley, Mass., 2006); T. Betteridge and A. Riehl (eds.), *Tudor Court Culture*, (Selinsgrove, 2010), *passim* and especially the introduction.

¹⁴¹ *Apologia*, p.88.

¹⁴² *Apologia*, pp.91 and 92.

¹⁴³ *Devil’s Sophistrie*, sigs.E^r and H2^r and ff.

¹⁴⁴ *An Answer*, sig. Q7^v and ff.

anti-Mass work (in his case placing as much emphasis on Hebrew and Latin as on Greek): ‘As for perfect understanding of the Scriptures, it muste needes be graunted convenient to have the knowledge of the Hebrue, greke and latine tonge to use the diligent comparinge of the scriptures together, and counsayle of learned teachers, divers interpretations and writinges of men of all ages. For hapely thou maist perceive by one that thou canst not understande by an other’.¹⁴⁵ He described these Biblical languages as ‘godlie giftes’, ‘hys worshyp instrumentes’ which could ‘revele, open and declare the hid misteries of his worde which ... shoulde flowe like a water streame’.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, so great was his faith in a thoroughgoing knowledge of language that he presented it, in effect, as a form of divine inspiration, writing ‘God hath imbued us wyth the knowledge of the the latine, greke and hebrue...’.¹⁴⁷ In fact, Gilby’s inclusion of Latin in a triumvirate of divine languages was proof of how a humanist approach to theology could get ahead of a more dogmatically Protestant one, for at this time, many derided the Latin text when it came to opinions about Scripture.

Ascham likewise accorded linguistic expertise with special powers. In the *Apologia* he wrote: ‘And to be sure, the man who engages in this cause [ie a debate about the Eucharist] destitute of all the assistance that the Greek language can provide certainly takes upon himself an insolent and ineffective task’.¹⁴⁸ Whenever he used the adjective derived from the Greek word ‘logos’ (ie. *logikos*, meaning of/pertaining to the word), it appeared in a Greek type-face as though to acknowledge its status as the authentic Word of God.¹⁴⁹ It was not just a question of using Greek, but appreciating how the perfection of divinely inspired language expressed the Word perfectly. Knowledge of the ancient tongue was not simply an adjunct but also played an integral and essential part in one’s whole engagement with theology.¹⁵⁰

It is with reference to Melancthon that it is possible to fully appreciate the importance of Greek in theology.¹⁵¹ Melancthon’s passion for Greek remained unabated even as the Reformation progressed; he continued to teach the subject and produced a Greek grammar.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ *An Answer*, sig.Aa2^v.

¹⁴⁶ *An Answer*, sig.C6^v.

¹⁴⁷ *An Answer*, sig.C6^v.

¹⁴⁸ *Apologia*, pp.88.

¹⁴⁹ *Apologia*, pp.53, 104 and 105.

¹⁵⁰ Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek?* pp.26 and 59.

¹⁵¹ The adoption of his Greek name (and that by Oecolampadius) also pointed to the ideological charge of knowing Greek.

¹⁵² Schofield, *Melancthon*, p.22.

In his *Oratio de Studiis Linguae Graecae* of 1549, he reiterated the case for Greek as a crucial vehicle for a full engagement with Scripture and as a means to hear the living voices of Paul.¹⁵³ A common Melanchthonian adage went as follows: ‘Every theologian and faithful interpreter of the heavenly doctrine must necessarily be first a grammarian, then a dialectician, and finally a witness’. The value of Greek in the discipline of Melanchthonian theology was further captured in the famous comment by Luther concerning Melanchthon’s aptitude in the subject: ‘This little Greek is better at theology than I am’.¹⁵⁴

For a number of reformers, Greek philology was, in effect, nothing short of theology itself. Although Ascham was in an extreme minority in England as regards his extensive linguistic analysis, at an international level, he was in the company of others who placed Greek language at the centre of their campaign for a theological Reformation. When it came to Greek, there was no established praxis for its study (compared to Latin which was central to medieval culture).¹⁵⁵ Ascham’s Greek philology marked him out as a theologian specializing in a new theological methodology and placed him at the very cutting edge of new doctrinal possibilities.

5.3.4 Rhetoric

Rhetoric was a pivotal element of the *studia humanitatis*. The discipline was not a new one resurrected only during the Renaissance; the Middle Ages too had a good stock of classical rhetoric at their disposal.¹⁵⁶ However, as one historian has put it, what changed in the Renaissance was not simply greater use of rhetoric but the high premium placed on it.¹⁵⁷ Matheson has even argued that it was words, their power and manipulation, that ultimately effected the religious shifts of the Reformation.¹⁵⁸ There has been some work which reviews how rhetoric did expand in parallel with the Reformation, for example, in conjunction with preaching.¹⁵⁹ That said, there still remains a lack of analysis of the overlap between rhetoric

¹⁵³ McGrath, *Intellectual Origins*, p.126; he adds that ‘in this matter Melanchthon can be said to speak as much as a representative for the humanist tradition as a reformer, if indeed the two schools could be distinguished at all at this juncture’.

¹⁵⁴ Schofield, *Melanchthon*, p.15.

¹⁵⁵ Cummings, *Literary Culture Reformation*, p.105.

¹⁵⁶ M.S. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the writing of History, 400-1500* (Manchester, 2011). J. Monfasani, ‘Humanism and Rhetoric’, p.172. Rhetoric had been one of the three main prongs of the trivium.

¹⁵⁷ Monfasani, ‘Humanism and Rhetoric’, p.173. Kennedy notes the increase in the number of practical handbooks on rhetoric by the mid-sixteenth century: G.A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and secular tradition from ancient to modern times* (London, 1999), p.247.

¹⁵⁸ Matheson, *Rhetoric Reformation*.

¹⁵⁹ Shrank has highlighted how Wilson’s *Arte of Rhetorique* functioned as guide to evangelical preachers in *Writing the Nation*, chapter 5. Monfasani has drawn attention to the close interaction of rhetoric and preaching,

and reformed theology, studies tending to concentrate more loosely on rhetoric's influence on Christian piety, morals and civic values. Ascham's *Apologia* provides an excellent demonstration of the degree to which rhetoric was closely bound up with the Protestant reform movement both practically and ideologically.

Ascham's anti-Mass tract was a rhetorical tour de force. Every sentence is susceptible of fruitful literary criticism. This was not simply about being stylish; Ascham's rhetoric was integral to his fight for theological change. To begin with, it shored up, in a subtle but effective way, his theological argument against the Mass. One of his main criticisms was the monopoly of the Mass which occluded administration of the true sacrament. He conveyed this point not only by the overall thrust of his words but rhetorically: 'But on what one matter do we spend each day without being sated and very long ages without nausea and establish the stronghold of our religion? Is it not in hearing the Mass? Is it not in seeing the Mass? Is it not the Mass alone which brings it about that everything else becomes "sent"?'¹⁶⁰ The accumulation of the rhetorical questions together with the the anaphora of *an-non* and the two successive *-enda* in *audienda* ('hearing') and *videnda* ('seeing') really underscored the total dominance of the Mass to the point of saturation. He concluded it all with a joke using word-play which essentially invested the word *missa* ('Mass') with a new layer of meaning, namely the responsibility of the 'sending away' (*mitto*) of all other religious rites. His rhetoric captured the very essence of this important theological message and worked to hammer it home all the more effectively.

More significantly, Ascham harnessed rhetoric as a positive means of capturing the true meaning of the Lord's Supper. In one of the most artistically crafted passages of the entire work, he evoked the sacred crux of the Supper with an immensely dramatic crescendo, reinforced by the devices of anaphora and asyndeton: 'For in the Supper, what can be more exalted than the founder, what more divine than the business itself, what more superior than its use, what more longed for than its purpose? The founder is Christ, the thing itself Christ,

observing how Erasmus's *Ecclesiastes* and *De ratione concionandi* took classical deliberative oratory as the prime model of preaching, dividing the sermon into parts: 'Humanism and Rhetoric' pp.205-6.

¹⁶⁰ *Apologia*, p.60. The Latin, which should be read aloud in order to appreciate its impact is: *At in qua una re singulos dies sine satietate, longissima secula sine fastidio consumimus, & arcem religionis nostrae collocamus? An-non in Missa audienda? an-non in Missa videnda? an-non sola Missa facit ut caetera omnia missa fiant?*

the use Christ, the purpose Christ, everything is Christ'.¹⁶¹ It had all the qualities of fervent chanting as though the words themselves facilitated a spiritual moment of worship. He followed this with a description of the Eucharistic communion, again carefully assembled for maximum rhetorical effect. He used, for example, a tripartite sentence, intricately interlacing 'Christ' and 'us' to convey the union, and framed each end of the clause with the word *coniuncti* ('joined together') in order to capture the spirit of participation of mortal in the divine: 'So that we may be at one with Christ and, having become bones from his bones, we may unite in the body of Christ and in this (way) not only be joined together in a certain spiritual grace, but also joined together in a natural and bodily sharing'.¹⁶² Here style and substance were not only in harmony but dependent upon each other. In a sense, Ascham was not so much explaining the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as enacting it; through the structure of the words, he had captured something of the emotional and intellectual power of the sacramental communion itself.¹⁶³ He had effectively tried to express God in human language, in effect, making the Word flesh.

To set the rhetoric of Ascham's Latin against other contemporary printed tracts on the Eucharist, the vast majority of which were written in English, is not really to compare like with like. Rhetorical tropes were available to writers in the vernacular, but, at this stage, there was no established tradition of rhetorical usage in English. That said, some Eucharistic tracts of this time do contain rhetorical conceits. One example was Gilby's *Answer*. Like Ascham, his rhetoric had various theological purposes; one of these was to humiliate the Mass. In a section where he rejected the worship of the bread as Christ's body, he deployed the repetition of negatives, symmetrical clauses and word-play to make the point more emphatically:

Feare him [viz. the bread] not therefore (o my little flocke), for he can neither do good nor vyll. No he hath neither life nor feeling. He felt not when he was baked into a cake, neither feeleth he when the priest breaketh him, because there is no spirite of lyfe in hym...The Goddes that you worshyp are none other thyng, but as the baker that baketh them...and the priest that maketh them.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ *Apologia*, p.7. The Latin is: *In caena enim quid authore sublimius, quid re divinius, quid usu praestantius, quid fine exoptatius esse potest? Author Christus est, res Christus, usus Christus, finis Christus, omnia Christus.*

¹⁶² *Apologia*, pp.10-11. The Latin reads as follows: *ut Christi toti simus, ut facti ossa ex ossibus eius, in Christi corpus coalescamus: & hoc non solum spirituali quadam gratia coniuncti, sed naturali etiam & corporali participatione coniuncti. Quomodo hoc fieri potest, ratio non invenit: quod autem ita sit, fides facile intellegit.*

¹⁶³ In his recent work, *Being Protestant*, Ryrie has drawn attention to the emotional intensity that Protestants could experience. See also P. Marshall 'Evangelical Conversion in the reign of Henry VIII' in Marshall and Ryrie, *Beginnings of English Protestantism*, p.24.

¹⁶⁴ *An Answer*, EEBO image number 159 (the pages number of the tract are jumbled at this point).

The verbal jingle of the baker's 'baketh' and the priest's 'maketh' not only lent more force to his point, but more closely connected the futile acts of a priest with the menial business of a simple artisan. Elsewhere, he tried to capture through linguistic arrangement the true theological nature of the Eucharist, namely the centrality of Christ and his infinite nature which could not be contained in the Mass pyx:

He is infinite, incomprehensible, unmeasurable, higher than the high heavens, lower than the deape and bottomless waters; he measureth the wyde worlde with with his spanne, and conteyneth all enclosed in his fiste...Wherefore when thou canst inclose in the box the rageyng seas, when thou canst catche the mone in a corner...when thou canst penne up the sunne in the pyx...¹⁶⁵

The fusion of theology and rhetoric had the power to persuade the reader of the correct approach to the Eucharist and the capacity to instil in men's hearts and minds an alternative theological ideal.

There was one ancient rhetorician who had more influence on Ascham than any other, an author familiar to anyone who followed the course of *studia humanitatis* - Cicero.¹⁶⁶

Ascham's whole *Apologia* was structured like a work of Ciceronian forensic oratory.

Composed as a speech, it began by addressing, with a typically Ciceronian flourish, the *gravissimi patres*.¹⁶⁷ Ascham's *exordium* (opening) followed the traditional style: it set out his basic cause, namely that the Mass was not the same as the Lord's Supper; set the tone of his speech as one of outrage and urgency; and finally established his own credentials and undermined those of his opponents – he claimed to be on the side of Christ, the King and the Protector and 'to recognise only the Lord's Supper which is handed down to us in Scripture from the Lord' unlike the Mass-makers 'who don't know and don't do what Christ has appointed for them'.¹⁶⁸ He then proceeded to the *narratio*, an explanation of what has happened, often with reference to history. Ascham here described the gradual subjugation by the Mass of the true Lord's Supper, and provided a full description of the Mass and its

¹⁶⁵ *An Answer*, sig.P3^v.

¹⁶⁶ Modern scholars debate about which classical author has exerted the greatest influence on Ascham's written style (be it in Latin or English) – the Greek Isocrates or Roman Cicero. J.S. Dees reviewed the bibliographic debate in his 'Recent Studies on Ascham' *English Literary Renaissance*, 10 (1980), pp.300-310. Gabriel Harvey (in his *Marginalia*) linked Ascham's periods to Isocrates (as per Vos 'Ascham's Prose Style', p.344). Greene described Ascham as the most influential Ciceronian produced in England (*Light of Troy*, p.268). Ryan has observed how the style of Ascham's *Toxophilus* conforms to the ideal of Ciceronian oratory (*Ascham*, p.66). The most recent investigations, particularly by Vos, have come down on the side of Cicero, but with the qualification that it was Cicero's earlier style, with its rather more high-flown Gorgianic figures, which attracted Ascham: Vos, 'Ascham's Prose Style', p.348.

¹⁶⁷ *Apologia*, p.1; cf. the customary *patres conscripti* of Cicero.

¹⁶⁸ *Apologia*, pp.1-27.

historical origins. He then then moved onto his *partitio* (division) using individual commandments from the Decalogue as his rhetorical ‘topics’.¹⁶⁹ The prevalent use of balance and antithesis in the *Apologia* were the cornerstones of the high Ciceronian style, a feature often referred to by scholars as *concinntitas verborum*.¹⁷⁰ The *Apologia*’s arrangement as a Ciceronian prosecution speech sent out a clear message about the way Ascham viewed his theological opponents – on the defensive and guilty of a crime.

Furthermore, Ascham’s whole tract was was shot through with both acknowledged and unacknowledged Ciceronian vocabulary and phrases or wording reminiscent of Cicero.¹⁷¹ But Ascham had more than a deep respect for Cicero.¹⁷² He seemed actually to think of himself as a second Cicero. In a letter to Sturm written at the end of his life, he asked: ‘If indeed I should desire to become another Cicero...What better road could I travel than to follow in the footsteps of Cicero himself?’¹⁷³ It was a claim endorsed by Grant in his 1577 dedication of the *Apologia* to the Earl of Leicester in which he referred to Ascham as a *secundus et alter Cicero* (‘second and other Cicero’).¹⁷⁴ The fact Ascham also appears to have changed or embellished the original Latin of certain Ciceronian phrases further supports this. For example, in his description of the insensible state of those who worship and perform the Mass, Ascham had written *arctissimus somnus universos fere complexus est* (‘The deepest sleep has enveloped almost all’), using a superlative of the adjective *arctus* (or more correctly, *artus*) where Cicero had used the comparative of the adjective, *artior somnus*, meaning ‘a sounder sleep’.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, Ascham described the Mass as ‘the Iliad of every evil and the Odyssey of all errors’ expanding on a phrase originally used by Cicero who had

¹⁶⁹ Cicero identified six parts of a speech: *exordium* (the opening), the *narratio* (or narrative), the *partitio* (or division), the *confirmatio* (the confirmation), the refutation, and the peroration (summing up and conclusion). Ascham’s *Apologia* was incomplete and broke off during the *partitio*. See Kempshall, *Rhetoric*, for more detailed description of the structure of a rhetorical speech written in accordance with classical protocol.

¹⁷⁰ Vos, ‘Ascham’s Prose Style’, p.368.

¹⁷¹ See the many footnotes in my translation highlighting the instance in which this occurs.

¹⁷² His admiration for Cicero was a constant theme of his correspondence and his final work, *the Scholemaster*. Patterson’s quantitative study of Ascham’s *Scholemaster* shows that the number of references to Cicero, totalling 135, far outweighed those to any other author (‘The Humanism of Ascham’ *Pedagogical Seminary*, xxii (December, 1914), pp. 546-551). Noyes, who carried out a similar study, calculated that Cicero was cited more than 200 times in Ascham’s English works, far more than any other author. She also observes that men who live with their favourite authors often assimilate more than they realise and that points of view are absorbed and expressed as their own: ‘Study of Roger Ascham Classics’, p.66.

¹⁷³ Ascham letter to Sturm (L) G:vol.2, 99, p.181/H:266, 1568.

¹⁷⁴ See appendix 2. William Camden in his elegy on Ascham made the same connection: G.B. Johnston, ‘William Camden’s Elegy on Roger Ascham’, *Studies in Philology*, 70, 2 (1973), p.170.

¹⁷⁵ *Apologia*, p.65. Cicero, *De Republica*, 6.10.

referred to ‘the Iliad of every evil’.¹⁷⁶ The use and development by Ascham of Cicero’s phrases was not only an act of deference but also a way of way of becoming (and improving upon) him.

That Ascham may have considered himself a second Cicero had important ramifications for his application of rhetoric in theology. Rhetoric for Cicero did not simply represent the use of style and rhetorical tropes and figures but an entire philosophy. It was a philosophy defined by Cicero himself as the alliance of eloquence and wisdom.¹⁷⁷ Such an outlook has previously been attributed both to humanists as a group and to Ascham himself, but generally only in epistemological and secular contexts.¹⁷⁸ Ascham in fact incorporated the philosophy of eloquence and wisdom into his theological system, thereby casting a very different light on his use of rhetoric. The right ordering of words equated to theological wisdom and orthodoxy. His use of rhetorical devices to condemn the Mass or, conversely, to amplify the centrality of Christ in the Eucharist, rendered his position all the more enlightened. At stake in his prolific antitheses, for example between the Mass and the Lord’s Supper, was not simply a neat opposition but the offer of a genuine theological choice, a choice formulated on the basis of wisdom. Rhetoric was a reality upon which theological and doctrinal truth depended and his Ciceronian-based philosophy was akin to an article of faith.

Moreover, it is evident that Ascham considered rhetoric to be invested with divine properties. In his *Scholemaster*, he was explicit about Cicero’s connection with Christianity. With direct reference to Cicero, he wrote: ‘Blessed be God and his son Jesus Christ whom you never knew, except it were as it pleased him to lighten you by some shadow’ and would refer to eloquence as a gift from God: ‘Good and choice meats be no more requisite for healthy bodies than proper and apt words be good for matters; eloquence is one of the fairest gifts God can give to man’.¹⁷⁹ Through his use of rhetoric in the *Apologia* he had discharged his duties as a true Christian in exposing false worship and appropriated the divine medium of

¹⁷⁶ *Apologia*, p.7, the Latin being: *Missa vero (ut verissimè loquar) omnium malorum Ilias ac omnium errorum Odyssea*. It appeared in Cicero as *Ilias malorum* in his *Ad Atticum*, 8.11 (and had in turn been translated by Cicero into Latin from Demosthenes’ Greek *Ilias kakōn*).

¹⁷⁷ As defined by Cicero himself at the start of his *De Inventione* and confirmed as a philosophy by: P.O. Kristeller, *The Classics and Renaissance Thought* (Camb. Mass., 1955), p.18; E. Armstrong, *A Ciceronian Sunburn: a Tudor dialogue on humanistic rhetoric and civic poetics* (Columbia, 2006), pp.8-9; and Vos ‘Good Matter and Good Utterance’, p.5.

¹⁷⁸ Gray argues that the ‘pursuit of eloquence’, was the characteristic which gave the humanist movement its coherence : ‘Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence’, *J.H.I.*, 24, 4 (1963), pp.497-514.

¹⁷⁹ *Scholemaster*, G:vol.3, pp.256 and 211.

the Holy Spirit as a way to praise God, Christ and his Word, and to get closer to them.¹⁸⁰ The climax in Ascham's *Apologia* of his description of the repristinated Lord's Supper which he referred to as *maximam rem* ('the greatest thing') effectively captured the fundamentals of his creed: 'What sort of life would it be if Christ were to occupy it all? If the mind (*mens*) in deliberation (*cogitatione*) and if the tongue in conversation (*sermone*)¹⁸¹ understood Christ and his glory...and displayed an understanding of the spirit for serving Christ'.¹⁸²

The synthesis of rhetoric and theological reform located Ascham within a broader network of like-minded individuals, theological reformers on the continent, like the Strasbourg circle of whom Sturm was an important member. The entire correspondence of Sturm and Ascham reflected their shared view of the close relationship between the ancient art of speaking well and their commitment to the Protestant cause. Their first exchange was a perfect example. Ascham opened his initial letter to Sturm with an encomium of rhetoric, its sacred qualities and its power to remove 'monstrous and savage custom'.¹⁸³ He praised Sturm for having 'imbibed the wholesome liquor of eloquence from Plato, Aristotle and Cicero and [having] focused all that eloquence on making the doctrine of Christ more sound'.¹⁸⁴ He even described rhetoric as 'soul-winning, as Socrates teaches'.¹⁸⁵ In response, Sturm praised Ascham as a man 'worthy indeed of the glorious name of evangelist', adding his hope that 'the kind of dwelling the masters of speaking once had at Athens and Rome would now be established in England so that your people who strive to imitate their virtues equal their glory and achievement'.¹⁸⁶ His letter also included a discussion of the Fathers in terms of their rhetorical style, Sturm concluding that Chrysostom was superior to Augustine 'not because Augustine is not wiser or more accomplished but because he is less fluent than Chrysostom'.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁰ Shuger charts the role of the Ciceronian style in the growth of the Christian aesthetic; she stresses the deep spirituality of high rhetoric and comprehends style as bound up with a journey of emotion towards God: *Sacred Rhetoric: the Christian grand style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton, 1988). There is other relevant scholarship on the appeal to the emotions in the Reformation: S. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions of Early Modern German* (Oxford, 2010); and M. Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation* (Farnham, 2011).

¹⁸¹ This use of the noun *sermo* is almost certainly a nod to Erasmus's substitution of the word *verbum* as a translation of the Greek word *logos*.

¹⁸² *Apologia*, p.13.

¹⁸³ (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.182/V&H:39, 1550.

¹⁸⁴ (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.182/V&H:39, 1550. Sturm wrote a commentary on a Ciceronian oration (Ryan, *Ascham*, p.143) and produced commentaries on the rhetoric of Aristotle.

¹⁸⁵ (L) G:vol.1, 99, p.187/V&H:39, 1550; the term 'soul-winning' appears in Greek type.

¹⁸⁶ Sturm to Ascham (L) G:vol.1,102, p.196/V&H:40,1550.

¹⁸⁷ (L) G:vol.1,102, p.200/V&H:40,1550.

There were other Strasbourg reformers who similarly prized rhetoric. Toxites and Wolf, both protégés of Sturm, praised the grace and style of Ascham's letters.¹⁸⁸ Bucer was credited by Ascham with being the person who had first drawn his attention to Sturm's eloquence.¹⁸⁹ Humanist rhetoric was also central to Melanchthon's activities as a Protestant.¹⁹⁰ In his early years he had been responsible for the production of books on rhetoric (*De Rhetorica libri tres*) which were being constantly revised during his life.¹⁹¹ His *De Rhetorica* was envisioned to be so much more than a manual of techniques and commonplaces on eloquence; it was in fact a systematic work of philosophy in which ancient models of composition were linked inseparably to the discovery of truth.¹⁹² Rhetoric was uppermost in his understanding of himself as commentator and theologian. Insofar as he viewed Scripture itself as a work of sacred rhetoric, it supplied the framework for his seminal Protestant apology, the *Loci Communes*, and his interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans.¹⁹³

Rhetoric cannot simply be viewed as a benign humanist preoccupation with little or no connection to the theological upheavals of the Reformation. It had the capacity to divide but also to illuminate, both to reflect and evoke theological truths. In certain strata of the reform movement, language and its manipulation was considered a sacred matter and was wholly integral to the theological process. It could be a vital theological tool both in theological exposition and fully embracing God's message, actualizing and reciprocating it. The Word of God could not be confined to a written text; it had to function as a loud cry, a vocal summons.

5.4 Humanist Theology

The individual humanist disciplines of the *studia humanitatis* were wholly integral to the workings of sixteenth century theology. Each strand constituted not simply an academic tool that could be applied to the theological process, but a means to comprehend and facilitate theology itself. Taken in the round, long-term immersion in humanist disciplines could give rise to an alternative, overarching and coherent humanist theological system of its own. This was a system which had its own understanding of religion, frameworks of analysis, structures of feeling and modes of dissemination. The consequence of such a humanist theological

¹⁸⁸ Grant, *Vita*, para.45.

¹⁸⁹ G:vol.1, 99, p.183/V&H:39, 1550.

¹⁹⁰ J. Schneider, 'Melanchthon's Rhetoric as a Context for Understanding his Theology' in Maag, *Melanchthon*.

¹⁹¹ Schneider, 'Melanchthon's Rhetoric', pp.146-147.

¹⁹² Schneider, 'Melanchthon's Rhetoric', p.147; as with Ascham and Sturm, Cicero was a favourite (pp.161-4).

¹⁹³ Schneider, 'Melanchthon's Rhetoric', pp.153-8; Kusukawa, 'Melanchthon', p.62.

system was the full intellectualization of faith. Essentially, this was a perspective in which there was no distinction between theological faith and humanist reason.

The interchangeability of faith and reason was reflected throughout the *Apologia*. Ascham's faith in the power of the Word and his view of Scripture as a *rem planissimam rationis* ('a matter full brimming with reason') meant that, for him, the Word, with the correct linguistic training, could be fully understood and did not need to remain a mystery.¹⁹⁴ For him, correct faith was, as he pointed out in the *Apologia*, one which 'exhibits that veneration for God which is 'of the logos' to use Paul's term, and which thrives in mind and understanding and does not cleave to things perceived by the senses'.¹⁹⁵ Fundamentally, the union of faith and mind formed the basis of his understanding of the sacrament of the Eucharist which he explained: '...should be an affair not of the teeth but of the mind, not of the stomach, but of faith', arguing that true *fidem* ('faith') was one that directed to the body of the Lord which must be *intelligitur* ('understood'), not seen.¹⁹⁶ The number of references he made to 'mind' (*animus* or *mens*) and 'reason' (*ratio*) in the theological context of the Eucharist was astonishing. Judgements and understanding of God's message were informed and supported by the cerebral rigour of his humanist skills.¹⁹⁷

Ascham's humanist approach to theology contained in his Eucharistic tract represented a powerful contribution to the sphere of theological affairs. Contrary to being a force for conciliation and harmony or one inclined to avoid theological confrontation, the ideology which underlay humanist practices based on precision of language and the notion of truth was necessarily authoritative, definitive and absolutist. Ascham's classical training coalesced with a personal and collective campaign for reform and unleashed new and original approaches and attitudes to theology. My focus has been the humanist theology of a man who supported Protestant reform. However, as some of my examples have illustrated, reformers of a completely opposite doctrinal viewpoint were often drawing on the same humanist techniques and skills. Humanist theology complicates the confessional axis. The Reformation was not simply a conflict about doctrine; theology itself had become a negotiated and contested medium.

¹⁹⁴ *Apologia*, p.58.

¹⁹⁵ *Apologia*, p.53.

¹⁹⁶ *Apologia*, pp.10 and 50.

¹⁹⁷ W. Otten, 'Religion as *exercitatio mentis*: a case for theology as a humanist discipline' in A.A MacDonald, Z. von Martels and J.R. Veenstra, (eds.), *Christian humanism: essays in honour of Arjo Vanderjagt* (Leiden, 2009), pp.62-4 and 67.

Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis has been to give greater prominence to one of Ascham's less well-known theological works, his Defence of the Lord's Supper, the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica*. In undertaking a translation and contextual analysis of the *Apologia* I hope to have added, in some measure, to our current understanding of Ascham. In existing scholarship there is very little to suggest that Ascham played any part at all in theological affairs or the religious Reformation. His *Apologia* constitutes a welcome counterpoint to this tendency. The broader review of Ascham and his life that this work prompts certainly illustrated the extent of his theological and religious involvement over a sustained period. The *Apologia* itself similarly reflected Ascham's theological credentials and experience, and stands as a powerful indication of his reforming zeal. The timing and seriousness of purpose of Ascham's anti-Mass tract were those of a religious reformer who was determined to encourage fundamental doctrinal change. Its contents are confirmation of his advanced Protestant outlook and his keen awareness of international theological developments. The distinctive Lutheran influences evident in Ascham's *Apologia*, which combined in an interesting way with several rather more Reformed doctrinal views about the Eucharist, force us to be on our guard against overly simplistic categorisations and periodization. The reform agenda of Ascham's tract coincided with the broader Edwardine efforts to reform the Eucharist, but his independence of approach, especially in his use of Scripture and individual theological methodology such as his mobilization of the Ten Commandments, are a salutary reminder of the diversity of Protestantism.

In composing his *Apologia*, Ascham relied to a great extent on humanist skills, such as Greek philology and rhetorical techniques. He also made frequent reference to classical literature and ancient history in the theological case he mounted against the Mass. However, it would be misleading to conclude from this that Ascham was simply a humanist dabbling in theology or, conversely, a former humanist who had become a Protestant. Ascham's humanism was practically and ideologically woven into the very fabric of his theology. His Eucharistic tract was an example of humanist theology in which humanism and Protestantism were completely fused. In this model of theology, humanism provided methodology and frameworks and also theological inspiration. It was an approach which is far better recognized in historical studies of the continental Reformation, but one that could profitably be explored in the written tracts

Conclusion

of a number of English reformers in the tracts of men like, for example, Gilby, Guest, Cheke, Haddon, Becon and Hooper. Humanist theology was an important phenomenon for it engaged directly with a broader and more fundamental reorientation of Christian theology that had been set in motion by the Reformation.

A further and previously neglected feature of Ascham's religious outlook that was exposed in his *Apologia* is his deeply entrenched anticlerical prejudice. It is possible to identify a range of personal reasons for this and indeed to reflect on the unintended consequences of state-sponsored anticlericalism. However, more interesting still is to observe the way in which Ascham's anticlericalism fed into and influenced his theological argument. Reform of the Mass necessarily entailed some challenge to the priesthood, but Ascham's attack on the priesthood was so vicious and far-reaching that it had the effect of undermining clerical office more generally. The relevance of Ascham's own background to his theological approach underlines the importance of taking full account of the ideas and convictions in the lives and circumstances of those who propounded them.

Finally, investigations into the circumstances surrounding Ascham's *Apologia* - the religious disruptions in Cambridge, the Eucharistic disputations and Ascham's subsequent correspondence - can also help nuance our appreciation of Edward's Reformation. This series of religious events all point to the existence of a concerted campaign for reform in the University which, in the early and more uncertain stages of Edward's new reign, represented an important spur for national theological reform and indeed contributed to the sharper definition of doctrinal fault-lines. It is important to recognise the important role which Cambridge University and, in particular, men like Cheke, Cecil, Haddon and Ascham played in driving forward the national Protestant programme.

Ascham's *Apologia*, although it remained in manuscript for nearly thirty years, had, at the very least, the potential to exercise a decisive influence on the shape of the Protestant settlement of his own time and beyond. Its eventual publication in 1577 at a critical point in the Elizabethan Reformation is suggestive of its enduring religious relevance and value. It is a tract which deserves to be better known, not just for the additional insights it can provide about Ascham himself, but the extra layer of understanding it can bring to studies of the Reformation.

Appendix 1

Ascham's *Apologia Pro Caena Dominica*: Latin text and English translation

APOLOGIA Rogeri Aschami, pro caeNA¹ DOMINICA, CONTRA MISSAM & EIUS PRAESTIGIAS.²

A defence, by Roger Ascham, of the Lord's Supper, against the Mass and its magic.³

[1][A] *DEUS PATER serpentem Diabolum affatus, gravissimi patres, & viri doctissimi, minitatur illi inimicitias mulieris, minitatur etiam ruinam per semen illius, addens grave certè nobis & acerbum hoc dictum, Et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius [Gen. 3]. Diabolus sane hoc dictum & tùm capessit, & ex eo tempore paratus semper & promptus idem urget, Evam novit, & nos figmentum Evae etiam cognovit, muliebrem nostrum assensum in fraudem illicere didicit. Fraudem illius Deus explicat, Insidiaberis inquiens: insidias vero non apertas & quotidianas, sed*

[2] tectas & latebrosas tendit. Instat, urget, circumspicit, itque reditque, versat se in omnes partes, malum bonum & bonum malum, lucem tenebras & tenebras lucem ponit, opere semper moliens, & animo semper iactans antiquum illud suum, In coelum conscendam, similis ero altissimo, super astra Dei exaltabo solium, & sedebo in monte Testamenti [Esa.14]. Insidias infinitas quas Diabolus struxit omni humanae societati, antè legem, pòst legem, sub gratia, nascente iàm Ecclesia Christi, nunc influens in omnem carnem cum

Most venerable fathers⁴ and most learned men, God the Father, having addressed the Devil, (who had taken the form of) a serpent, threatens him with the enmity of a woman, and even threatens ruin through her seed, adding this really grievous (to us) and bitter dictum: 'And you will lie in ambush for her heel'.⁵ Indeed the Devil then also took hold of this dictum and, from that time forth, presses on, always ready and likewise (always) at hand; he became acquainted with Eve and also recognised us to be the image of Eve and he has learnt to secure our womanly complicity in the deception. God elucidates his deception, saying: 'You will lie in ambush'. To be sure, he (the Devil) pitches an ambush which is not obvious and usual,

but concealed and lurking.⁶ He is in constant pursuit, he presses on, he exercises caution⁷, and goes and returns,⁸ he turns himself into all parts, sets in place bad for good and good for bad, and light for shadows and shadows for light,⁹ always busy in his endeavour and always tossing in his mind that ancient (saying) of his: 'I will ascend into Heaven, I will be like the most High, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God and I will sit upon the mount of the Testament'.¹⁰ This unlimited ambush that the Devil devised for the whole of the human race, before the law and after the law, under grace, and, with

¹ sic.

² This is the printed version as set out in STC 825. I have included the accentuation both of the Latin and Greek and reproduced the spellings of Latin words as used in the printed form. *praestigiae* is a word used regularly by Cicero.

³ My intention has been to produce a fairly literal translation.

⁴ In this context, *pater* denotes a general title of respect; the appellation is very Roman, reminiscent of, for example, Cicero's *patres conscripti*.

⁵ This and the previous sentence allude to Genesis 3:15. In the Latin, non-italics in parentheses represent hanging notes in the margins which may be Ascham's or the printer's. In the English translation, I have referred to/translated them in footnotes. Wilson considers that the margin references in the *Toxophilus* were Ascham's own: 'Ascham's *Toxophilus* and the Rules of Art', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 29 (1976), p.30.

⁶ *latebrosas* is a rare word which, for example, Cicero uses in *pro Sestio* 59.126.

⁷ These three verbs are reminiscent of the vocabulary used of the military conflict in Book 12 of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

⁸ *itque reditque* was a common poetic tag in Virgil, Ovid and Martial.

⁹ A quote from Isaiah 5:20.

¹⁰ Isaiah 14:13. *similis ero altissimo* is out of order, appearing in verse 14 (not 13) in the Vulgate and the Greek Septuagint.

<p><i>voluptatibus & multiplicibus illecebris, nunc furibundus ruens in omnem Tyrannidis libidinem, cum diris tormentis asperimisquē suppliciis, nimis longum esset recensere: nostra tempora nos hoc tempore deplorare instituimus, in quibus Diabolus omnes insidias comparauit, omnes vires suas & totum sese effudit ad obruendam nauem Iesu Christi. [Diabolus obruit navem Iesu Christi]. Ad quam rem Diabolus nauclerum idoneum, aptos remiges, instructos nautas, singularem artem, parata κελεύσματα (keleusmata) adhibet. [Diabolus Nauarchus. Papa Nauclerus. Episcopi personati Remiges. Sacrifici Nautae] Princeps nauarchus Diabolus, nauclerus Papa, remiges Episcopi personati, nautae</i></p> <p><i>[3] [Aii] infiniti Sacrifici, ars humana doctrina, κελευσματα (keleusmata) supererogatiua merita. Diabolus Deum è throno Testamenti removere studet, Papa Christum à clauo abigit, Episcopi piscatum eunt. Quid piscantur? homines? vè aduersarii iudicent. Sacrifici velis remisquē incumbunt, humana doctrina, recluso verbo Dei, sola ferè malos scandit, per foros cursat, [Humana doctrina] proram & puppim regit, anchoram figit, & quid non? Cum humanam doctrinam dico, non leuem, sed rem summi momenti dico. Diabolus hanc rem summa prudentia, summa iusticia induit, ut Paulus diserte explicat [Colos.2, 2 Cor.11]. Itaque quo sapientior quis est, quo sanctior, quo modestior, quo iustior, qui doctrinam aliam inducit, aut inductam defendit, quàm quae Christi doctrina comprobâri potest, is profecto Diaboli nauta [Diaboli nauta, quis]est, ad submergendam nauem</i></p>	<p>the Church of Christ just beginning, sometimes entering all flesh with passions and manifold enticements, and sometimes mad¹¹, rushing into every licence of tyranny with cruel torments and severe penalties, it would take too long to recount. We, at this time, have begun to deplore our times in which the Devil has arranged every ambush and given over all his strength and his whole self for the purpose of wrecking the ship of Christ. To which end, the Devil employs a suitable ship's captain, efficient oarsmen, well-prepared sailors, remarkable skill, ready orders¹²: the sea captain in chief being the Devil, the ship's captain being the Pope, the role of the oarsmen assumed by bishops, the sailors being</p> <p>countless sacrificers,¹³ the skill being human doctrine, and the orders, supererogatory good works. The Devil strives to remove God from the throne of the Testament, the Pope drives out Christ from the helm¹⁴, the bishops go fishing.¹⁵ For what are they fishing? Men? Or, if you will, let our adversaries decide. Sacrificers exert themselves with sails and oars and, with the Word of God shut up again,¹⁶ human doctrine, almost alone, climbs the masts,¹⁷ it runs through the ship's gangways, it keeps sway over the prow and the stern, and fastens the anchor, and what does it not do? When¹⁸ I speak of human doctrine, I speak of not a trifling matter but one of great significance. The Devil cloaks this matter in the utmost professionalism and the utmost righteousness¹⁹, as St. Paul eloquently explains.²⁰ Consequently, the wiser, the more venerable, the more temperate, the more righteous someone is, who introduces a doctrine, or defends one that has been introduced, which is other</p>
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¹¹ *furibundus* is a rare word, again used by Cicero in a polemical context in *pro Sestio* 7.15 and his *Philippics* 13.9.

¹² *keleusmata* - This is the first of many ancient Greek terms used by Ascham in the text and appearing in the Greek script. Wherever Greek script is used, I also include a transliteration in parentheses.

¹³ *sacrifici* is a substantive from the adjective *sacrificus* and used throughout. The word started to be used in c.1537 according to the *Revised Medieval Latin Word List*.

¹⁴ The word for 'helm', *clavus*, also means 'nail'; the word may convey a more literal picture of the dismantling of Christ's body from the cross.

¹⁵ Note in Lucian's dialogue *The Dead Come to Life* (or *The Fisherman*), 'Frankness' goes fishing in Athens for charlatan philosophers.

¹⁶ *Recludo* (and *recluso*), which I have translated as 'shut up', can more commonly mean 'to reveal', in which case this ablative absolute could have a concessive sense: 'even though the Word of God had been revealed'.

¹⁷ Note Cicero uses the words *cum alii malos scandunt* in *de Senectute* 6.17.

¹⁸ The *cum* might also mean 'whenever', but that is more commonly followed by a perfect or pluperfect tense.

¹⁹ *iusticia* and words cognate with it require different translations depending on the context. When applied to his opponents, the sense of 'righteousness' seems appropriate. It can also denote 'justice' or something 'just', but more importantly in Reformation terms it conveys the idea of Lutheran 'justification'. I use all of these at various points.

²⁰ Ascham is here echoing the warnings set out in each of Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Colossians not to be beguiled by words and led astray (Colossians, 2:4, 2:8 and 2:18 and 2 Corinthians 11:3).

<p><i>Iesu Christi. Qui existimat Diabolum imperitum quendam esse in delectu suorum habendo, imperitus ille est: Diabolus enim non stultos [Astutia Diaboli] & idiôtas, non leues & praecipites, sed prudentes & doctos, constantes & graues, & iustos ad sua munera obeunda accersit.</i></p> <p><i>[4] Neque hîc veram prudentiam & doctrinam in vituperationem adduco, nec ullius vitii patrociniûm suscipio, sed Diaboli fraudem ostendo, & eorum hominum, qui suam iusticiam, & doctrinam, non Iesu Christi, vel libidine propugnant, ut Papistae: vel commodo quaerunt, ut impii: vel metu sequuntur, ut frigidi: conatum studium, & voluntatem omnem reprehendo. Sed ad nauem nostram revertamur. Christus hos hostes invasuros in nauem suam longè ante praeuidit, & armaturam integram in usum suorum comparauit [Ephes. 6.]. Verùm quò lapsa prouisio Christi est? Arma nostra, aut ablata, aut recondita, aut contusa iacent. Iugulum veritatis [Fructus Papismi] disruptit hypocritica vanitas, loricam iusticiae fregit scelerum improbitas, calceos pacis Euangelii ademit superstitionis securitas, scutum fidei rupit vilissima operum dignitas, galeam salutis excussit innumerabilium humanorum dogmatum tempestas, gladium spiritus, quod est verbum Dei, extorsit humanae doctrinae vis ac Tyrannica potestas: praeterea orationem, magnam partem sustulit inanis labiorum iactatio, ieiunium obscurauit dierum &</i></p> <p><i>[5][Aiii] ciborum vana demoniaca (ut inquit [Tit.1:4] Paulus,) obseruatio. Pro crucis afflictione, impia intrauit signaculi crucis adoratio. Pro hymnis,</i></p>	<p>than one capable of being sanctioned by the doctrine of Christ, he is, without a doubt, a sailor of the Devil, bent on wrecking the ship of Jesus Christ. The man who judges the Devil²¹ to be someone inexperienced in his choice of recruits, is himself inexperienced, for the Devil does not summon²² stupid and ignorant men, lightweights or the rash to discharge his duties, but prudent and learned men, steadfast and serious men and those who are righteous.</p> <p>Nor at this point do I draw genuine knowledge and doctrine into criticism, nor do I enter upon a defence of any crime; but I demonstrate the deception of the Devil and of those men who either defend with caprice their own righteousness and doctrine, not that of Jesus Christ, just like Papists, or seek it for their own advantage, like ungodly men, or follow it with fear, just like cowards.²³ I condemn every such endeavour, exertion or inclination. But let us return to our ship. Christ discerned long ago that these enemies would attack²⁴ his ship and provided a complete set of armour for the use of his own men.²⁵ Indeed, to where has the foresight of Christ sunk?²⁶ Our arms just lie there, either carried off, hidden away or broken. Hypocritical deceit broke the neck of Truth;²⁷ the depravity of crimes shattered the cuirass of justification; refuge in superstition took away boots of Gospel peace;²⁸ the worth placed on the most worthless of works ruptured the shield of faith; a storm of countless human dogmas drove out the helmet of salvation; the strength of human doctrine and Tyrannical power drove off the sword of the Spirit, namely the Word of God; moreover, the worthless bragging of lips destroyed the use of language²⁹ to a great extent and a pointless and Devilish observation of days and of food obscured the act of fasting (as Paul says³⁰). In the place of pain of the cross, wicked worship of the</p>
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²¹ The hanging margin note reads 'the cunning of the Devil'.

²² *accerso* = *arcesso*.

²³ *frigidi* can also mean 'indifferent'.

²⁴ sc. *esse* after *invasuros*.

²⁵ Ascham is referring to Ephesians, 6:11 and ff., when Paul exhorts the Ephesians to 'put on all that armour of God that ye may stand against the assaults of the Devil' (as per Great Bible) and then proceeds to speak metaphorically about aspects of faith being akin to items of armour.

²⁶ *lapsus* (which I have translated as 'sunk') can also mean 'to fall away from the true faith' in ecclesiastical Latin. *lapsa* (which I have translated as 'sunk') can also mean 'to fall away from the true faith' in ecclesiastical Latin. The printed version is difficult to make out here and I have assumed the last letter of *lapsa* is 'a'.

²⁷ This and the following points come under the general heading in the margin of 'the fruit of Papistry'.

²⁸ An allusion to Ephesians 6:15.

²⁹ By *oratio*, Ascham could mean language generally or even 'eloquence' here.

³⁰ The hanging note in the Latin is odd; there is no reference to this in the Epistle to Titus 1:4.

quibus mente & corde psalleremus Deo, inutilitèr modificata symphonia, & nimis mollis ac delicata, sine intelligentia, vocis inflexio. Pro Dei operibus, vivis & veris illius imaginibus, in quas nos intuentes & defixi, aeternam Dei maiestatem incomprehensibilem esse monemur, vana artificis simulachra, in quibus nihil, nisi quod corporeum & concretum est contemplantes, corpoream Dei effigiem, id est, abominabile idolum ob oculos ponere, & coniectura fingere ac informare docemur. Pro egenis pauperibus à Christo missis, ut in illis nostram erga Deum pietatem & studium ostenderemus, splendidae & sumptuosae sanctorum imagines, ut precibus, donis, & oblationibus, eorum opem & gratiam imploraremus. Pro bonis operibus, quae coram hominibus lucere debent in subleuandis hiis tenebris horum miserorum temporum, ut glorificetur Pater qui est in coelis, accensa in templis luminaria, & id in splendore solis, ut sancti, qui

[6] sunt in coelis, clariùs cernant nostram stultitiam in terris. Pro dono linguarum & eruditionis ad aedificationem Ecclesiae, non intellectus labiorum strepitus, & turba ignorantium sacerdotum, telluris inutile pondus, ad magnam offensionem Dei. Pro manifesta declaratione verbi Dei, in aperto loco, ut cognosceretur veritas, secretae cantiones, & peregrinae murmurationes in cancellos quosdam conclusae, nè perciperetur vanitas. Atque ut totum Papismum in unum acervum aggregem, pro recto ministerio sacramentorum, & verbi Dei, externum & Iudaicum sacerdotium sine ullo testimonio Scripturae introducitur. Postremò, pro sacrosancta Domini nostri Iesu Christi caena, in qua corpus & sanguis Christi cum gratiarum actione distribuuntur communicantibus in memoriam eius, Missa papistica, in qua superstitio & idôlalatia cum Mimicis & histrionicis praestigiis prostituuntur spectantibus ad quaestum lucri. Navis Christi hiis mercibus iam onerata est, de quibus universis cum

sign of the cross forced its way in. In the place of songs of praise which we ought to sing in our hearts and minds to God, unprofitably melodious symphonies and an inflexion of the voice which is overly gentle and effeminate and without understanding (forced their way in). In the place of living acts of God and genuine images of Him upon which we, gazing fixedly, are instructed that the everlasting majesty of God is utterly unimaginable, the false effigies of an inventor in which we see nothing except what is corporeal³¹ and hard, a corporeal imitation of God (forced its way in); that is, we are taught to place before our eyes abominable idolatry and to fashion and mould prophesies. In the place of poor and needy men sent from Christ unto whom we might demonstrate our devotion and zeal towards God, glittering and lavish images of saints whose succour and favour we might invoke with prayers, gifts and offerings (forced their way in). In the place of good deeds which in the presence of men ought to shine to alleviate these shadows of these wretched times of ours so that our Father who is in heaven might be honoured, candles³² lit in shrines - and that, in the brilliant light of the sun - so that the saints who

are in heaven, may see all the more clearly our folly on earth (forced their way in). In the place of the gift of speech and erudition as a means to build our Church, an incomprehensible din of lips and a throng of ignorant priests, an unprofitable burden of the land for the great offence of God (forced its way in). In the place of a clear exposition of the Word of God in an open place through which the truth may be known, secret incantations and exotic murmurings closed up in certain enclosures so that the deceit may not be perceived (forced their way in). And in order that I might gather the whole of papistry together in one pile, in the place of the proper administration of the sacraments and of the Word of God, an external³³ and Jewish priesthood without any Scriptural authority is being established. Finally, in the place of the most holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ in which the body and blood of Christ, with an act of thanksgiving, are apportioned to the communicants in remembrance of Him, (there exists)

³¹ A term (*corporeum* in the Latin and repeated) with specific connotations in the context of the Eucharist.

³² This reference to candles almost certainly constitutes a condemnation of the ceremonies of Candlemas, the Purification of Our Lady.

³³ I translate the epithet *externus* throughout as 'external'; it connotes both exterior show (as opposed to interior faith) and/or a foreign nature, depending on the specific context.

<p><i>libentèr differerem, hoc certè tempore satis pro</i></p> <p>[7] [Aiiii] <i>dignitate, uel potius pro indignitate talium rerum non possum, delegi igitur mihi hunc [Institutum authoris.] postremum locum, ut pro caena Dominica contra Missam dicerem, cum caena sit redemptionis & totius salutis nostrae sigillum [Caena Dominica saluris nostrae sigillum.] & monumentum: Missa vero (ut verissimè loquar) omnium malorum Ilias, [Missa omnium malorum Ilias] ac omnium errorum Odyssea. Quantum beneficium Christi haec impia Missa nobis abstulit, cum caenam abstulit, nec mente comprehendì, nec oratione declarari potest: dicam tamen aliquid, licèt non satis ad dignitatem tantae rei, satis tamen & plusquam satis ad deplorationem tantae iacturae & dispendii. In caena enim quid authore sublimius, quid re divinius, quid usu praestantius, quid fine exoptatius esse potest? Author Christus est, res Christus, usus Christus, finis Christus, omnia Christus. [Caenae author, res, usus, finis, est Christus.]. Alterius rei quantumvis divinae institutionem cum caena Dominica compara, & vilescent statim universa. Iactet Circumcisio Abraham, Lex Mosen, Baptismus Ioannem, & aliae res Angelos suos: at sola caena solum agnoscit Christum. [Sola caena solum agnoscit Christum.] Et hoc authore, licet maximo, ipsa tamen voluntas</i></p> <p>[8] <i>& oportunitas authoris in hac re constituenda quodam modo maior existit.</i></p> <p><i>Minimis verbis, maximam rem si non complectar, attingam tamen. [Attende.] Peccavit Adam, damnavit Deus, morieris iniquiens: sententia Dei tam</i></p>	<p>the papistical Mass in which superstition and idolatry are publicly exposed³⁴ with mime-artists' and actors' magic to those who gaze on for the purpose of financial gain. The ship of Christ has now been laden down with these wares, and since I gladly separate myself from all these things – certainly at this time,</p> <p>I cannot do that sufficiently according to the dignity or rather lack of dignity of such things - I have therefore adopted for myself this final³⁵ argument³⁶ that I might speak on behalf of the Lord's Supper against the Mass, since the Supper constitutes a sign and a memorial of redemption and the whole of our salvation;³⁷ the Mass, however, (as I will speak very truthfully) constitutes the Iliad of every evil and the Odyssey of all errors.³⁸ What great gift of Christ this ungodly Mass took from us when it took away the Supper it can neither be understood by the mind nor expressed in speech. I will, however, say something, notwithstanding that it is insufficiently worthy of so great a thing, though sufficient and more than sufficient for the purpose of lamenting such great damage and loss. For in the Supper what can be more exalted than the founder, what more divine than the business itself, what more superior than its use, what more longed for than its purpose? The founder is Christ³⁹, the thing itself Christ, the use Christ, the purpose Christ; everything is Christ.⁴⁰ Compare as much as you want the arrangement of any other divine matter with the Lord's Supper and they all immediately seem worthless. Let the circumcision of Abraham, the Mosaic Law, John's baptism and other things, parade their own merits.⁴¹ Only the Supper recognises Christ alone. And this founder as great as he is, the inclination itself</p> <p>and the fitness of the founder in this constituting this thing (ie. sacrament) is nonetheless somehow greater.</p> <p>With the minimum number of words, even if I fail to explain the greatest thing, I will still touch on it. Adam sinned and God condemned him, saying 'You will die'.</p>
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³⁴ This verb's connotations of prostitution are relevant in the context.

³⁵ *postremum* seems to be operating as an adjective rather than an adverb here.

³⁶ The margin note translates as 'the purpose of the author'.

³⁷ The margin note says 'The Lord's Supper, the sign of our salvation'.

³⁸ This is a quotation from Demosthenes - ἰλίας κακῶν (*ilias kakōn*) - and adapted as *ilias malorum* by Cicero in *ad Atticum* 8.11. The margin note reads: 'the Mass, the Iliad of all evils'.

³⁹ *auctor* (which I have translated as 'founder') can also mean 'intercessor', a term which could also be applied to Christ here as Ascham considers him the only intercessor whereas the priest's role is redundant.

⁴⁰ The margin note summarises the points and reads: 'The founder, the essence, the use, the purpose of the Supper are Christ'.

⁴¹ 'Angels', the literal translation of *Angelos*, are a metaphor for virtues or merits.

dura est, ut lamentâri homo non tollerâre: tàm iusta, ut mirâri non conqueri: tam rata, ut desperâre non revocâre illam potuerit. Ubi iaces nunc homo? Quò demissus es? Vitam amisisti, mortem induxisti, regnat peccatum, furit Diabolus, minatur iusticia, avertit se Deus. Ubi iaces nunc homo? Ubi spes salutis? In ullo homine? At filius irae omnis homo est, horret faciem Dei. In Angelo? At ille ipse opus habet nexu aliquo, quo solidè cohaereat Deo. In solo Deo? At Deus propter divinitatem, sententiam mortis subîre non potest. In solo homine? At licet homo moriatur, ut destruat mortem, nihil habet tamen quo restituat vitam. Attende nunc quomodo dico iudicibilem bonitatem Dei, filius Dei unigenitus intuetur in hostem, & miseretur ut amici: relinquit quodammodo Patrem, & coelum, ut visat hominem & terram: suscipit omnem humanam

[9] [Av] infirmitatem, ut transfunderet homini suam potentiam: miserum se reddit, ut te beatum efficiat: perdit se, ut inveniat te: tradidit se morti, ut te restituat vitae: mortem toleravit humanitate, ut hominem moriendo a sententia Patris liberaret: & vitam reparavit dignitate, ut hominem resurgendo benevolentiae Patris reconciliaret. ô Altitudo! ut cum Paulo clamemus At eccè altius quiddam, si potest fieri, mors iàm deleta est, vita restituta est: & totum beneficium Christi est. Sed undè hoc scimus verum esse? Undè certi sumus? ubi promissio? ubi sigillum quo hoc beneficium nobis consignatur? Eccè Christus ea nocte qua traditus est, iàm iàm moriturus, hoc est, rem humano generi expectatissimam effecturus, sedit cum discipulis suis, ut testamentum suum conderet, ut bona sua legaret. Quid legavit? Regna mundi, & divitias non legavit, quia non habuit: non habuit, quia contempsit. Quid habuit? Corpus habuit, quod traderet: sanguinem habuit, quem funderet: dat corpus, dat sanguinem: clariora ille dâre, maiora

The judgment of God is so harsh that man has been able to lament it, but not to bear it; so just that he has been able to be stunned by it, but not to complain; and so established that he is able to despair, but not to call it back. Man, where do you lie now? To where have you sunk? You have lost your life, you have brought in death, sin reigns, the Devil rages, justice threatens and God turns himself away. Man, where do you lie now? Where is hope of salvation? In any man? But every man is the son of anger⁴² and trembles before the sight of God. In the Angel? Yet he needs something with which to cleave closely to God. In God alone? But God on account of his divinity is not able to undergo the sentence of death. In man alone? Whilst man may die and so overcome death, he has, however, no means of restoring life. Pay heed at this point to the way in which I describe the justifying goodness of God - the only son of God gazes upon the enemy and has compassion for him as a friend; somehow He leaves behind his Father and heaven in order to survey man and earth; He takes on himself every

human weakness in order to transfer his power to man; He renders himself wretched in order to make you blessed; He loses himself in order to find you; He gave himself up to death, in order to restore you to life; He endured death with humanity in order to free man through his death from the judgement of His Father; and He renewed life with worthiness in order to re-unite man, through his resurrection, with the benevolence of the Father. O Greatness, to shout aloud with Paul!⁴³ But see! Something greater, if that is possible - now death is destroyed and life restored and this is the whole gift of Christ. But from where do we know this to be true? From where do we derive our certainty? Where is the promise? Where is the sign via which this gift is vouched for us? Behold Christ on that night when He was handed over, any minute about to die, that is, about to bring to pass for the human race a thing long awaited⁴⁴, sat with his disciples, in order to establish his testament and in order to bequeath his gifts. What did he bequeath? He did not bequeath kingdoms of the world and riches because He did not possess such things. He did not possess such things because he despised them. What did he have? He had a body to give up; He had blood to shed. He gives (of) his body

⁴² Note Ephesians 2:3: 'We...were by nature children of wrath'.

⁴³ Paul exclaims *o altitudo* at the start of 11:33 of Romans in reference to the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

⁴⁴ *expectatissimam* could also mean 'long desired'.

[10] *nos expectâre non potuimus. In sanguine, pretium redemptionis quod solueret: in corpore, beneficium vivificationis quod daret. Dat ille, & iubet nos ut accipiamus: Quid, ut reservemus? Ille hoc non docet, ut erigamus ad aspectum, ut circumferamus ad adorationem, hoc tu dicis optimum. Cave quid dicis homo, & cave magis quid facis, & cave maximè quid defendis. An tu prudentior Christo? An ille non fecit quod erat faciendum? An ille ignoravit quid melius esset faciendum? Viam ipse ostendit, tu sequere, & aliam nè quaeras. Si eius via optima est, cùr in peiores te trudis? Si eius via rectissima est, cùr in devia deflectis? Si mandat Christus, ut eius sequaris vestigia, cùr tu citrà mandatum eius in hominum deflectis diverticula? Quid habes homo quod respondeas Deo? Iubet Christus ut accipiamus, iubet ut comedamus & bibamus: negotium hoc non dentis, sed mentis: non stomachi, sed fidei existat: praeparet se animus tuus, & ritè sequetur corpus tuum. Cur comedemus, cùr bibemus? ut Christi toti simus, ut facti ossa ex ossibus eius, in*

[11] *Christi corpus coalescamus: & hoc non solum spirituali quadam gratia coniuncti, sed naturali etiam & corporali participatione coniuncti. Quomodo hoc fieri potest, ratio non invenit: quod autem ita sit, fides facile intellegit. Quid comedemus? Quid bibemus? Si oculum tuum interrogas, respondet, panis: si linguam tuam interrogas, respondet, vinum: & vere respondent. Nam quod videtur, panis est, ut ait Aug. [Augustinus.] & quod gustatur, vinum est. Si rationem tuam interrogas, quod sentitur respondet: quod intellegitur non advertit. Si fidem tuam interrogas, illa interrogat Christum: & quod Christus dicit, fides credit: nec rationem ex rebus sensibilibus quaerit, sed mysterium in rebus intelligibilibus agnoscit. Si Christum interrogas Christus docet, & hunc doctorem sequere: nam docet*

and he gives (of) his blood.

He could not have given more manifest gifts and we could not have hoped for greater (gifts). In (His) blood was the price of redemption which he would pay, and in body the gift of life which he would give. He gives and orders us to accept. Why, in order that we conserve it? He does not teach this in order for us to raise it up to view, or to carry it around as a means of worshipping him, which you say is the best way.⁴⁵ Man, be careful what you say, even more careful what you do, but most of all be careful what you uphold. Are you wiser than Christ? Did he not do what had to be done? Or was he unaware of what was a better thing to do? He himself showed the way; you, follow and do not seek an alternative one. If his way is the best way, why do you thrust yourself into inferior ones? If his is the most correct way, why do you turn away into crooked ones? If Christ bids you to follow in his footsteps, why do you turn into the backstreets of men without regard to his commandment? As a man, what do you have that you can respond to God? Christ orders that we receive; he orders that we eat and drink. This should be an affair not of the teeth but of the mind, not of the stomach but of faith.⁴⁶ Let your mind prepare itself and your body will duly follow. Why will we eat, why will we drink? So that we may be at one with Christ and, having become bones from his bones,

we may unite in the body of Christ and in this (way) not only be joined together in a certain spiritual grace, but also joined together in a natural and bodily participation. How this can happen reason does not find out. However, what it is, faith easily comprehends. What will we eat? What will we drink? If you ask your eye, it responds ‘bread’; if you ask your tongue, it responds ‘wine’ and they respond truly. For what is seen is indeed bread, as Augustine says, and what is tasted is wine.⁴⁷ If you ask your reason, it responds what is sensed and does not attend to what is understood. If you ask your faith, that faith asks Christ, and what Christ says, faith believes and nor does it seek reason among sensible things, but discerns the mystery among intelligible things. If you ask Christ, Christ teaches, and follow this teacher, for he teaches with the greatest authority, learn you, without any hesitation. Christ,

⁴⁵ Ascham clearly meant the act of ‘adoration’ here.

⁴⁶ A nod to Augustine who wrote: ‘Why do you make ready your teeth and your stomach? Believe and you have eaten’ (sermon 112, chapter 5).

⁴⁷ Almost certainly a reference to Augustine’s commentary on John, *Tractates* 26 (John 6:41-59).

cum summa autoritate, & disce tu cum nulla dubitatione. Quid das Christe? Respondet, Hoc est corpus meum, Hic est sanguis meus. At quod corpus dicis? Quem sanguinem narras? Et hinc etiam docentem Christum libenter sequamur: Corpus quod pro vobis traditur, Sanguis qui in remissionem peccatorum effunditur. Non igitur quaerendum

[12] aliud corpus ab eo quod traditum est, nec alius sanguis ab eo qui effusus est. Sequamur Dominum dicentem, Corpus meum traditum, Sanguinem meum fusum: non sequamur rationem dubitantem, quae verba Domini sui agnoscere, non sensum suum fingere debuerat. Quid Deus dat, scriptura docet: quomodo vero nos accipere debemus, & eadem scriptura docet: Facite hoc in meam commemorationem. Qui commemorationem Christi levem rem esse putat, & beneficium redemptionis leve quoque esse ducit. Quid Christus fecit pro te, agnoscas, & gratias agas. Quid Christus vicissim a te requirit, ab illo discas, nec alias novas rationes exquiras. Donum ab eo datum recipe, & modum recipiendi ab eo traditum tuere. Dat corpus suum semel oblatum, ut tu comedas, non ut tu iterum offeras: ut accipiatur scriptura iubet, ut offeratur scriptura non iubet, sed vetat. Sed haec in alium locum reservabimus. Fructus caenae Dominicae superat meam intelligentiam [Fructus Cena]. Si comederimus eius carnem, & biberimus eius sanguinem, in illo vivemus, & ille in nobis [John 6.]:

[13] manebimus in eo, resurgemus in eo, & vitam aeternam haereditate in eo possidebimus. Qualis vita nostra esset, si Christus eam totam occuparet? Si mens cogitatione, si lingua sermone, Christum & eius gloriam sapiant: si oculi, manus, & pedes, si singula quaeque membra, nutum & voluntatem Christi expectarent: si singula inquam membra, ad parendum iusticiae, paratissima sese praeberent, nec ullum carnis sensum ad insolentiam, sed intelligentiam spiritus ad obediendum Christo exhiberent, ut tota anima nostra in toto corpore nostro, suavissimum illum versum Davidis, in omni vitae nostrae ratione usurparet: Benedic anima mea Domino, & omnia [Psalm 102] quae intrame sunt

what do you give? He replies ‘This is my body; this is my blood’. And what body do you speak of? What blood do you tell of? And on this point also, we should gladly follow Christ teaching: the body which is given up for you, the blood which is spilt for remission of sins. Nor, therefore, must

any other body be sought other than what has been handed over, nor any more blood other than that which has been shed. We should follow the Lord when he says ‘My body has been given up, my blood shed’. And we should not follow our own uncertain judgment which ought to have recognised the words of its Lord and not have fashioned its own meaning. Scripture teaches what God gives, and indeed the same Scripture teaches how we ought to receive: ‘Do this in remembrance of me’. He who considers that the remembrance of Christ is a trifling matter also accounts the gift of redemption trifling. You should recognise what Christ did for you and give thanks for it. In turn, what Christ requires from you, you should learn from him, not seek any other new reasons. Accept the gift given by Him, and conserve the means of receiving again as handed over by Him. He gives his body as an offering just once in order that you might eat, not so that you might make a fresh offering; that there may be a receiving, Scripture orders, that there may be an offering, Scripture does not order, but forbids. But we will keep these things for another place. The delight of the Lord’s Supper surpasses my power of understanding. If we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we will dwell in Him and He in us.⁴⁸

We will reside in Him, we will rise again in Him and we will take possession of eternal life in Him by way of inheritance. What sort of life would ours be if Christ were to occupy it all? If the mind in deliberation and if the tongue in conversation were to savour⁴⁹ Christ and his glory; if the eyes, hands and feet and every single limb awaited the command and will of Christ; if, I say, each single limb gave itself up in complete readiness in obedience to justification and did not display any inclination of the flesh for excess, but an understanding of the spirit for serving Christ so that the whole of our soul in the whole of our body would apply, in the whole conduct of our life, that most delightful verse of David:

⁴⁸ John 6:56. Cf. the Latin Vulgate (6:55) *Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in illo*. Erasmus used the verb *edit*.

⁴⁹ Note the switch to the present subjunctive here (with *sapiant*).

<p><i>nomini sancto eius. Hanc suavitatem vitae adferret nobis suavissima caena Dominica: quam diu & multis seculis exclusit nobis privata Missa papistica. Quemadmodum enim mundo lucem & vitam dempseris, si solem eximas: sic vitam abstuleris Ecclesiae, si caenam auferas. Et hanc vitam Christus iam in hominibus passim non vidit: sed quisque in privatam commoditatem capitur,</i></p>	<p>‘Prayse the Lorde, o my soule: and all that is wythin me, prayse hys holy name’.⁵⁰ The most delightful Supper of the Lord should deliver unto us this delight of life which for a long time and for many centuries the private papistical Mass has shut us off from. For just as you would have removed light and life from the world if you were to remove the sun, just so, you remove the life of the Church if you remove the Supper. And this kind of life Christ does not now see everywhere in men. But each man is lured into private benefir</p>
<p><i>[14] quia Missa papistica sustulit caenam Dominicam, quae arctissimum omnis Christianae societatis existit. Ne miretur quis, quod contra Missam iam dico: atque si miratur, audiat me Christiano animo: nec iudicium iam factum domo deferat, & desinet, spero, mirari, si ullam aut voluntatis Dei, aut salutis hominis rationem ducendam esse putaverit. Dicimus igitur, quod Missa non sit caena Dominica. [Missa non est caena Dominica] Duo libri sunt, qui totam hanc contentionem inter Caenam & Missam concitarunt: alter est novum Testamentum Iesu Christi, alter sacerrimum illud Missale sacerdotum: [Novum tesatmentum Iesu Christi. Missale sacerdotum] et hi libri per me totam hanc nostram disputationem decident. Uterque liber summam auctoritatem habet, sed posterior maiorem apud plurimos reverentiam. Nam hîc etiam pedem posuit Diabolus, & eduxit meras tenebras in conspectum & usum hominis, & lucem Evangelii abdidit in abstrusam & infirmam conditionem. Et ego ipse audivi in hac Academia, Theologum magni nominis dicere, se malle sequi errores in Missali, [Missale] quam loca emendata in novo Testamento.</i></p>	<p>because the papistical Mass has taken away the Lord’s Supper, which is the most diminished⁵¹ element of every Christian society. Let no one be amazed that I now speak against the Mass and, if he is amazed, let him listen with a Christian mind; he should not bring from home a decision already made, and he will, I hope, if he thinks that either of the will of God or the salvation of mankind must be held in some esteem,⁵² cease to be amazed. We say, therefore, that the Mass is not the Lord’s Supper. There are two books which have fuelled⁵³ this entire controversy between the Mass and the Supper. One is the New Testament of Jesus Christ, and the other, that most revered⁵⁴ Missal of the priests. And these books will, by my reckoning, determine this whole debate of ours. Each book is accorded the utmost authority, yet, among the majority of people, the latter is accorded greater respect. For even here the Devil has made his mark and led out mere shadows into the sight and use of man and concealed the light of the Gospel into a hidden and weakened state. I myself have heard in this very University⁵⁵ a theologian⁵⁶ of great stature say that he prefers to follow the errors of the Missal [Missal] than the proofs in the New Testament which are perfect.</p>
<p><i>[15] Missale intueri religio est: caecitatem minatur inspectantibus: & facile credo, nam occaecavit</i></p>	<p>To give attention to the Missal is a form of religion,⁵⁷ (but) it threatens the onlookers with blindness, and I</p>

⁵⁰ Psalm 102:1 (V/GS) / 103:1 (H/P). I have translated this in accordance with the Great Bible. It is clear from the reference to Psalm 98 below (p.51) within the text itself that Ascham was also following the V/GS numbering for the Psalms.

⁵¹ *arctissimum* is from *artus*.

⁵² An idiomatic usage of *rationem ducere*.

⁵³ A syncopated form of the perfect tense, originally *concitaverunt*.

⁵⁴ *sacer* can mean both ‘sacred’ and ‘accursed’.

⁵⁵ *Academia* clearly denotes the University. The word derives from the Greek for an Academy, an institution made famous by Plato and applied by Cicero to his estate on the way from Lake Avernus to Puteoli and to his Tusculan villa.

⁵⁶ It is unclear who this might be.

⁵⁷ Ascham uses the term *religio* repeatedly which I translate either as ‘form of religion’ (as in a ‘rite’, or ‘ceremony’) or ‘religion’ (in the broader sense of the word).

<p><i>magnam partem sacerdotum, & fere universum mundum. Lux verbi Dei fuit in mundo, sed dilexerunt homines magis tenebras quam lucem</i>[Ioan.3]. <i>Verum, Deo volente, non verebor producere in conspectum hominum hoc Missale Eleusinum, ut admoto lumine Christi, tantae tenebrae arguantur. Agete ergo, Missam ex Missali vestro producite, ego Caenam Dominicam ex verbo Dei: conferamus interse, sinon, cuius corvi ovum sit, ipsa prodat, cadat causa Caenae Dominicae. At priusquam libero pede ingrediar in sacraria Papisticae Missae, morem huius scholae & huius Academiae sequar: subiiciam me doctrinae & authoritati illi, cui debeo me subiicere: ante omnia precor Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, ut splendore verbi sui discutiat, in hac disputatione, omnes nebulas humanae doctrinae, ut veritas nec prosternatur fulminibus Pigii, nec deridatur scommatibus Thomae Mori. Doctrinam illius solum recipio, qui novit hanc caenam instituere, & potest eam iterum</i></p>	<p>(can) easily believe this⁵⁸ for it has blinded a large number of priests and almost the whole world. The light of the Word of God was in the world, but men delighted more in shadows than in light.⁵⁹ In truth, God willing, I will not shrink from exposing this Eleusinian⁶⁰ Missal unto the sight of men so that, with the light of Christ at hand, such great shadows can be denounced. Proceed, therefore, bring forth the Mass from your Missal, and I the Lord's Supper from the Word of God. Let us compare them with one another, to see if it does not reveal of itself of what crow it is the egg and fail on account of the Lord's Supper.⁶¹ But before I go without any inhibition into the secret places of the papistical Mass, I will follow the custom of this school and this Academy. I will submit myself to that doctrine and authority to which I ought to submit myself. But above all, I pray for our Lord Jesus Christ to dissipate in this disputation, all the obfuscations of human doctrine with the splendour of his Word so that the truth may not be overthrown through the rantings⁶² of Pighius nor derided⁶³ by the scoffings of Thomas More. I accept only the doctrine of that man who knew (how) to establish this Supper and is able to restore it again.</p>
<p><i>[16] restituere:[Contra humanam doctrinam] humanam doctrinam ut suspectam universam repudio. Suspecta omnis ea doctrina merito est, cuius author apud Deum mendatii tenetur: Omnis (enim) homo mendax. Et quoniam hic locus postulat, quid sit deum ducem (ut est in proverbio) sequi, & in vestigiis humanae vitae inhaerere, autoritate & exemplis Scripturae, consilio & monumentis Patrum explicabo. At quid facio? Quam disputationem ingredior? An ullus haeret in hac re, utrum plus Deo an homini tribuamus? De hac re contendet quispiam? Inaudita quaestio, & inanis disputatio. Audite doctissimi viri, ex animo loquor, & cum ratione loquar: nulla alia contentio est in religione</i></p>	<p>I repudiate human doctrine as altogether unsound.⁶⁴ All that doctrine is justly (considered to be) unsound, the author of which is held to be by God (the author) of a lie. For every man is given to lying.⁶⁵ And since this place demands it, using the authority and examples of Scripture, (and) the counsel and records of the Fathers, I will explain what it is to follow God as a leader (as he is in the old saying⁶⁶) and (what it is) to cleave unto the tracks of human life. But what do I do? Which dispute do I embark on? Is anyone at a loss⁶⁷ in this matter as to whether we should attribute more to God or to man? Will anyone argue with this? That would be an unusual investigation and a worthless debate. Listen, o learned men, I speak from the mind and I will speak with</p>

⁵⁸ In the printed version there is a full stop after *facile* and before *credo*, but it this seems to be a misprint and it is better (as shown in my version of the text) to assume a comma was intended.

⁵⁹ John 3:19. Ascham's Latin wording follows the Vulgate and Erasmus.

⁶⁰ The Eleusinian cults of the ancient world were associated with the afterlife, but proverbial for their mysterious and secretive nature.

⁶¹ *mali corvi malum ovum* ('bad egg from a bad crow') was a common Latin proverb.

⁶² Ryan, in quoting this, translates *fulminibus* as 'thunderbolts', suggestive of Jupiter, a pagan god: Roger Ascham, Stanford and Oxford, 1963) p.310.

⁶³ sic., though *deridatur* should technically be *derideatur*.

⁶⁴ The margin note indicates that Ascham is here writing 'Against human doctrine'.

⁶⁵ A Lutheran phrase.

⁶⁶ Ascham may be thinking of the phrase *deus dux* used in 2 Chronicles 13:12.

⁶⁷ This is a valid meaning of the verb *haereo*.

<p><i>Christiana, quàm, utrum Deo vel homini consentiendum sit. Subdat se humana doctrina voci Dei, & conticescent omnes lites. Hic omnes haerent. Sed quam doctrinam, aut cuius hominis doctrinam pertimescimus? Aristotelis aut Platonis? Non certe: Turcae? minime: Principum leges, & gentium iura? Neque hoc quidem: formidamus solum doctrinam eius, quem Psalmus expressis verbis notat,</i></p>	<p>reason: there exists no other dispute in the Christian religion than whether there must be agreement with God or man. Let human doctrine subordinate itself to the voice of God and all disputes will cease. On this point, all men hold firm. But which doctrine, or rather whose doctrine are we afraid of? That of Aristotle, or Plato's perhaps? No definitely not. What about that of the Turk?⁶⁸ Hardly. The laws of those who rule or the rights of the people? No, not even this. We should dread only the doctrine of the one to whom the Psalm refers with unambiguous words, saying:⁶⁹</p>
<p><i>[17][B] inquires: Quoniam si inimicus meus male mihi dixisset, sustinuissem utique. Et si is qui oderat me, super me magna loquutus fuisset, abscondissem me forsitan ab eo. Tu vero homo unanimes, Dux meus & notus meus, qui simul mecum dulces capiebas cibos, in domo Dei ambulavimus cum consensu. Hic est qui tollit se & doctrinam summam supra omne id quod dicitur Deus. Exemplum da. Mandat Deus, Non furaberis, Non adulterabis, Non concupisces: mandat homo unanimes & dux meus, Non comedes carnes in die Veneris. Utrum mandatum altius sedet in conscientia hominis? An furtum? [Furtum] hoc popolare est apud aliquos: Adulterium? [Adulterium] ludicrum est apud multos: Concupiscere rem alienam? [Rem alienam concupiscere, quid] vix agnoscitur peccatum, & quotidianum studium est apud plurimos. Ast quid comedere carnes? [Carnes comedere, quid] Hic horret conscientia hic metu concutitur, hic Dei vindictam formidat, haec summa & unica religio est. Da exemplum in doctrina. Doctissimi viri, cum in hanc rem ingredior, invenio totam doctrinam Papisticam in hoc unum studium incumbere & conspirare, ut homo</i></p>	<p>‘Since if my enemy had insulted me, I could certainly have borne it. And if the man who hated me had spoken weighty things above me, I could perhaps have hidden myself away from him. But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and my friend, who was taking fine food together with me and we walked into the house of God in accord’. This is he who elevates himself and his supreme doctrine above everything which is called God.⁷⁰ Give an example. God commands: ‘Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not covet’. The man mine equal, and my guide, commands that thou shalt not eat meat on a day of Venus. Which of the commandments resides more deeply in the conscience of man? That of theft? This is common among some. Adultery? That’s a sport for the majority. To covet something belonging to another? It is scarcely acknowledged as a sin and there is a daily propensity for it amongst the majority. And what of eating meat? This man trembles with conscience, this man is shaken with fear, this man fears the vengeance of God and this represents the supreme and only religion. Give an example in doctrine. Learned men, when I start down this path, I find that the whole of papistical doctrine inclines towards and unites in this one endeavour, that man</p>
<p><i>[18] & eius doctrina immigret in locum Christi & Evangelii. Nam quid aliud est quam merita humana erigere contra gratuitam iustificationem fidei? Et arbitrii humani vires in contentionem committere cum gratia Dei? postremo, quod caput est & unica</i></p>	<p>and his doctrine take the place of Christ and the Gospel. For what else is it than to raise human works up against the free justification of faith? And (what else than) to commit the force of human judgement to compete with</p>

⁶⁸ *Turcae* is not a Classical Latin word, but listed in the *Revised Medieval Latin Word List*.

⁶⁹ Psalm 54:13-15 (V/GS) or Psalm 55:12-14 (H/P). Ascham follows the wording of the Vulgate.

⁷⁰ The Psalm extract Ascham has quoted appears to lament the betrayal by an intimate, though scholars disagree about the specific identity of the individual mentioned; Ascham interprets the passage as representing the adherence by an individual to human doctrine over divine.

Arx, in qua munit se contra Christum Papa, auctoritatem Ecclesiae cum auctoritate verbi Dei comparare? omnes hae caussae sunt vel hominis contra Deum, vel Papae contra Christum. Si hae caussae & harum caussarum defensores non fuissent, nec Evangelium cum humana doctrina, nec Papa cum Christo, nec Missa cum Caena Dominica hoc tempore in Anglia concertaret. Nec profecto mirum est, si hii homines sic faciunt: nam viri Dei, optimo (ut visum est) instituto, humanam inventionem contra voluntatem Dei saepissime concitarunt. Cur ita? Quia homo & voluntas eius aegerimme subditur voluntati Dei. Exempla Scripturae hanc rem planam faciunt. Primum probabimus, quod solus Deus audiendus sit [Solus Deus audiendus]: deinde, quod multi sancti viri, etiam in sanctissimis rebus (ut putabant) plus sibi quam

[19] [Bii] Deo tribuunt. Dicit Dominus, Tantum [Numb. 22] facite quod ego praecipio vobis: quod dicit Tantum, excludit reliquos, & ipse non dubito satis praecipit. Quid praecipit tantum, & quomodo praecipit tantum? Praecipit ut fugiamus malum, ut sequamur bonum, & hoc tantum est, & hoc satis est. Quomodo praecipit? Per Mosen & Prophetas, ut inquit Paulus: per filium suum dilectum, ut inquit Evangelium. Vox Patris est, Hic est filius meus dilectus, [Matt. 17.] ipsum audite: Pater nihil aliud loquitur in Evangelio, ut nos nullum alium sequamur in omni doctrina. Moses & Prophetae prohibent a malo: & in Iesu Christo solo cognoscimus & facimus bonum: et hoc est tantum facite quod ego praecipio vobis. Quid est audire Christum? Audire verbum eius. Tollet haec [Christum audire quid] res omnes controversias: audite quid ait Christus: Qui audit verba mea ex Deo est: Qui non audit, ex Deo non est. Per hoc cognoscimus spiritum veritatis & spiritum erroris. Ergo, qui nituntur verbo Dei, sequuntur

the grace of God? Finally, (what else than) to compare that which is the source and only protection⁷¹ in which the Pope defends himself against Christ - the authority of the Church - with the authority of the Word of God? All of these are cases⁷² either of man against God or Pope against Christ. If these cases and the defenders of these cases had not existed, the Gospel would not be contending with human doctrine, nor the Pope with Christ nor the Mass with the Lord's Supper in England at this time. Nor indeed should it be a source of amazement if these men act in this way. For men of God, with the best (as it seemed) intention, very often have stirred up⁷³ human invention over the will of God. Why should this be so? Forsooth, man and his will are very poor substitutes for the will of God. Examples from Scripture make this matter clear. Firstly we will demonstrate that God alone must be heard and then that many holy men, even in their most sacred matters (as they used to think them), attribute more to themselves than

to God. The Lord says, 'Do only what I command you to do'.⁷⁴ Because he says 'only what', he excludes the rest, and I myself have no doubt that he commands enough. So what is this 'only what' he commands and how does he command 'only what'? He commands that we flee from evil, that we pursue what is good; this is the 'only what' and this is enough. How does he command? Through Moses and the Prophets, as Paul says, and through His chosen Son, as the Gospel says. The Father's command is: 'This is my chosen Son, hear ye him'.⁷⁵ The Father says nothing else in the Gospel in order that we follow nothing else in every doctrine. Moses and the Prophets ward us from evil; in Jesus Christ alone we perceive and do good: and this is the 'only' (namely) do what I command you. What is it to hear Christ? To hear his Word.⁷⁶ This thing will remove all controversies. Hear what Christ says: 'He who hears my words is from God; he who does not hear, is not from God'.⁷⁷ It is on account of this that we recognise the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷¹ The term *arx* can have connotations of tyranny.

⁷² *caussae* = *causae*. Cicero used *caussa*.

⁷³ *concitarunt* is syncopated for *concitaverunt*.

⁷⁴ Numbers 22:20. A similar exhortation is given in verse 35: 'But what I say unto the, that shalte thou speake' (as per Great Bible). Ascham has selected the essential orders of God from this chapter.

⁷⁵ Matthew 17:5 (and also Matthew 3:17). Ascham has omitted *in quo mihi bene complacitum est*, but in all other respects follows the wording of Erasmus and the Vulgate.

⁷⁶ The margin note reads 'What it is to hear Christ'.

⁷⁷ John 8:47. Ascham has switched the order: the Vulgate and Erasmus read as follows: *qui est ex Deo, verba Dei audit; propterea vos non auditis quia ex Deo non estis*, an order also followed by Tyndale and Luther.

<p><i>spiritum veritatis: humana doctrina fisi sequuntur spiritum erroris. Fatemur, inquiunt multi, sequimur verba,</i></p> <p><i>[20] sed sensum ab hominibus petimus. O Generatio distorta! Quasi in verbis Christi non sunt ipsa sensa Christi: aut incertum est verbum Christi, & certum hominis: fluctuabimus in Christo, & consistemus in homine. Petra inconstans est, & arena stabilis. Bene est, nam nisi sic dicitis, nil habetis quo hominem contra Deum statuatis. Iacobus docet aliam discendi rationem: [Iacob. 1] Qui indiget sapientia, postulet a Deo inquit. Et sic patres vetustissimae Ecclesiae cum precibus suis, non cum praeiudicatis aliorum sentiis ad lectionem Scripturarum accedebant. Duo homines sunt: alter nimis & mordicus sequitur verbum Dei, alter facile deflectit in iudicium hominis. Psalmus de utroque iudicat: de primo, [Psal.111] Beatus vir qui in mandatis Domini volet nimis: de secundo [Psal.80], Populus qui relinquit vocem Domini, ibit post inventiones suas. Et quare deficiunt a Deo ad hominem? ostendit caussam Christus, inquiens: Reiicitis mandatum Dei,[Matth.5.] ut traditionem vestram statuatis: hoc consilium est, quod sane consilium, quo maiore pietate & prudentia susceptum est, eo evidentius signum</i></p> <p><i>[21] [Biii] est, quòd a Diabolo totum profectum est. Diabolus enim tales operarios semper habet. Sed audiamus Scripturam. Samuel ait ad Saul, zeloticus Deus est, Deus tuus, nec cum altero quicque communicat. Et hic obgannit aliquis: Non reges</i></p>	<p>Therefore, those who rely upon the Word of God follow the spirit of truth; those who have placed their faith in human doctrine follow the spirit of error. We admit it, many say, we follow his words,</p> <p>but we seek their conception from men. O perverse generation! As if in the words of Christ there were not the very conceptions of Christ, or as if the Word of Christ was uncertain and that of man certain. We will vacillate when it comes to Christ, but will stand firm when it comes to man. A rock is changeable and the sand unchangeable. It is just as well, for unless you talk in such a way, you will have no means of standing man against God. James teaches us another principle to learn; he says: ‘Whoever is in want of wisdom, let him ask for it from God’.⁷⁸ And thus, the Fathers of the oldest Church approached the reading of the Scriptures with their prayers, not with the prejudiced sentiments of other men. There are two sorts of men: one who follows overmuch and tenaciously the Word of God, and the other who too easily inclines to the judgement of man. A Psalm comments on each: about the first, ‘Blessed is the man who will delight too much in God’s commandments’⁷⁹; and about the second sort, ‘People who relinquish the voice of God, will go after their own inventions’.⁸⁰ And why do they forsake God for man? Christ offers a reason, saying, ‘You reject the commandment of God in order to constitute your own tradition’.⁸¹ This is his conclusion and what is clearly his conclusion, the more it has been accepted with piety and foresight, the more obviously it is a sign that</p> <p>it has originated from the Devil in its entirety. For the Devil is always engaged in such labours. But let us heed Scripture.⁸² Samuel speaks to Saul, ‘God is jealous’⁸³, thy God, and nor does he communicate anything with another’.⁸⁴ And at this point someone snarls: ‘Shall</p>
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⁷⁸ Epistle of James 1:5. Ascham follows the Vulgate wording, though the earlier Vulgate has *sapientiam* (changed in later editions to *sapientia*) which Ascham may have been here correcting; Erasmus’s wording is different: *cui deest sapientia, postulet ab eo qui dat, nempe deo....*

⁷⁹ Psalm 111:1 (V/S) / Psalm 112:1 (H/P). Ascham’s wording is almost identical to the Vulgate.

⁸⁰ Psalm 80:12-13 (V/S) / 81:11-12 (H/P). Ascham has conflated two verses of the Psalm here.

⁸¹ This could refer to Matthew 5:19, ‘Whosoever therefore breaketh one of these leest commaundmentes...’, although, the hanging note is probably wrong and the reference should be to either Matthew 15:3 ‘Why do ye also transgresse the commaundment of God because of youre owne tradycion?’ or Mark 7:8 ‘For ye laye the commaundment of God apart and observe the constytutions of men’. (As per the Great Bible). It should be noted though that there are discrepancies between Ascham’s wording and that of Scripture in respect of each of these.

⁸² A number of the following points and Biblical quotes are used in his *Theologica Themata* (pp.194-5).

⁸³ Ascham has made a Latin adjective out of a Greek noun, ζηλωτής, οὗ (zēlotēs, ou). It is a noun usually associated in the Bible with Jews who are strongly committed to a cause, such as the Zealots who were a Jewish sect known for their persecution of Christians.

⁸⁴ 1 Samuel 15:23 and 26.

ponent plebiscita? Non episcopi sua decreta? ponent maximè, sed audi, contineant se suis finibus, quod hactenus non fecerunt: nec ingerant sese in officium Dei, ut aliquid addant aut diminuant, ne in gravissimam offensionem Dei, & maximas plagas incurrant: nam de praeceptis Dei sic monet scriptura: [Eccles.3.] Quae praecipit tibi Deus, illa cogita semper, & novas vias ne scrutatus fueris. Cyprianus Christianae religionis clarissimum lumen, [Cyprianus christiane religionis clarissimum lumen] vehementer invectus est in hanc caussam, inquiens: Adulterum est, impium est, sacrilegum est, quodcunque humano furore instituitur, ut dispositio divina violetur. Deus ergo solus in ordinationibus divinis sequendus est. Quomodo homines etiam saepissime honesto instituto (ut videtur) relinquunt Deum, & eunt post suas inventiones, exemplis utriusque Testamenti comprobabimus.

[22] [Exod.32.] Populus Israel, cum consensu etiam Aaron summi sacerdotis, erexerunt vitulum aureum contra Dominum. Gedeon, vir Dei, Ephod Domino bono animo consecravit, [Iudic.8.] qua re, magnam Domini offensam sibi comparavit. [Reg.1.15.] Bono animo Saul victis Amalechitis, armentum in victimam novam Domini, quam Dominus non praecepit, reservavit: ob quod facinus, ab imperio deterbatus est. Oza, filius Abinadab, manum admovebat [Reg. 2.6] bono animo ad Arcam Domini delabentem, & ad necem a Domino percussus est. Ex novo Testamento, non multa, sed selecta exempla proferam, quae possunt commovere hominem, qui non obduruerit ad vocem Scripturae, ut caveat quid in religione novum excogitat, quod Deus aperte non praecipit. primum discamus ab omnium doctore domino nostro Iesu Christo, quod nihil debemus immutare quod Deus constituerit. Deus pater constituit ut Christus moreretur, moriturus Christus voluntate sua humana

kings not set in place a decree of the people? Shall bishops not set down their own decrees?’ They will set down prolifically, but listen, let them confine themselves to their own jurisdiction, something they have not done to date. Nor let them barge their way into the service of God in order to add anything or take anything away⁸⁵, lest they incur the most weighty offence of God and the greatest misfortunes. For Scripture advises the following about God’s commandments ‘Whatever God commands to you, reflect always on that and don’t be someone who searches out new ways’.⁸⁶ Cyprian, the most brilliant light of the Christian religion, has fiercely attacked this cause, saying: ‘It is unclean, it is wicked, it is sacrilege whatever is established through human madness so that the divine order is violated’.⁸⁷ Therefore, only God must be followed in respect of affairs that are divine. How men, even as is most frequently the case with an honourable intention (as it appears), relinquish God and go after their own inventions we will demonstrate with examples from each of the Testaments.

The people of Israel, with the agreement of even the ultimate priest Aaron, erected⁸⁸ a golden calf in opposition to our Lord.⁸⁹ Gideon, a man of God, dedicated with good intentions an ephod⁹⁰ to the Lord but, in doing so, brought about the great displeasure of God upon himself.⁹¹ And with good intentions, Saul, upon the defeat of the Amalechites, preserved cattle for a new sacrifice of the Lord which the Lord had not commanded;⁹² on account of this outrage, he was demoted from his post of king. Uza⁹³, son of Adinadab, with good intentions, put forth his hand to the falling ark of the Lord and was struck down and killed by the Lord.⁹⁴ I will adumbrate not many but select examples from the New Testament, which can unsettle a man who has not grown hardened to the voice of Scripture, with the purpose that he should beware anything new in religion that he comes across which God does not openly command. And first let us learn from our Jesus Christ, Lord and teacher of all, that we ought not to alter

⁸⁵ *diminuant* also has connotations of violation and outrage.

⁸⁶ Ecclesiastes 3:22. Ascham is paraphrasing here.

⁸⁷ Cyprian, book I, epistle 8 / epistle 43 (there are two forms of numbering of Cyprian’s letters).

⁸⁸ The singular noun *populus* is taking a plural verb (*erexerunt*) presumably collectively.

⁸⁹ Ascham refers here loosely to Exodus 32:4, 8 and 35.

⁹⁰ An Old Testament word meaning a vestment comprising an apron and straps worn by priests.

⁹¹ Ascham refers loosely here to Judges 8:27.

⁹² Loosely referring to 1 Samuel (otherwise called the First Book of Kings) 15:9, 11, 15 and 24.

⁹³ In the Great Bible, the son of Abinadab is Uza, not Oza.

⁹⁴ A loose reference to 2 Samuel 6:6 and 7.

<p><i>quodammodo discrepavit a consilio Patris, & propterea orat, Pater mi, si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste. Si voluntas humana in Christo Iesu visa est declinare a praescripto</i></p> <p><i>[23][Biiii] Dei ut transeat ab illo calyx, quem pater obtulit illi, quam securitatem in aliorum bonorum voluntatibus extra verbum ponemus? Imo que non licentiam in voluntatibus papistarum contra verbum pugnantium expectabimus? Sed quare Christus hoc dixit? Propter se? nequaquam: sed ut nos haberemus omnem humanam voluntatem suspectam in divinis constituendis rebus. Quam mentem Christi, si Papa induisset, ut diceret, Non sicut ego volo pater, sed sicut tu vis: & caenam Dominicam ad hunc usque diem retinuissemus, & hac Mimica Missa, cuius ne vestigium quidem in scripturis est, hoc tempore caruissemus. Sed persequamur exempla aliorum. Petrus, [Petrus] bono animo, abscidit aurem Malco: Paulus, [Paulus] honesto instituto rogavit Dominum ut stimulum carnis sibi auferret: Ioannes, [Ioan.] piamente, prostravit se ad pedes Angeli: & tamen male fecerunt. Quare? Quia extra verbum in rebus religionis processerunt. Si Petrus, Paulus, & Ioannes hoc commiserunt, quam suspectus nobis debet esse quivis alius homo, qui extra verbum aliquid in religione constituit? Non laudati</i></p> <p><i>[24] sunt Apostoli, quia sic fecerunt: sed a Deo reprehensi sunt, quia novum esse excogitaverunt. Si Missa igitur divinissima est, in divinis institutis inveniat: si illic vero non sit, sed a Diabolo sit introducta, per sentinam Papisticam ad nos derivata, & caeca consuetudine hactenus conservata, ut Dominicam caenam de possessione sua deiiciat, desinant homines eam defendere: aut armis Christi non Papae, pro ea, quod non possunt, propugnent.</i></p>	<p>anything which God has decreed. God, the father, decreed that Christ should die, and Christ, being about to die, by his own human will was somehow at odds with the plan of the Father, and therefore he begs ‘My Father, if it is possible, may that cup pass over from me’.⁹⁵ If the human will in Jesus Christ seemed to differ from what God had prescribed,</p> <p>so that the cup which the Father offered to him may pass over from him, what trust will we place in the will of other good men that is beyond the Word? And so, will we not dread the freedom in will of Papists fighting against the Word (of God)? But why did Christ say this? For his own sake? By no means, but in order that we may treat every human will suspect in divinely constituted matters. If the Pope had assumed this mind of Christ with the result that he might say: ‘Not as I wish, Father, but as you wish’,⁹⁶ we would have held onto the Lord’s Supper right up to this day and have lacked at this time this imitation Mass of which there is not even a mention in Scripture. But let us recount the examples of other men. Peter, with good intentions, tore away the ear from Malcus.⁹⁷ Paul, with an honourable intention, asked the Lord to remove bodily pain for him.⁹⁸ John, in a moment of atonement, prostrated himself at the feet of the Angel.⁹⁹ However, they acted badly. Why? Because they proceeded, in matters of religion, beyond the Word. If Peter, Paul and John have perpetrated this, how suspicious ought we to be of any other man, whoever he is, who has constructed something in religion which is beyond the Word?</p> <p>And the Apostles were not praised because they acted in such a way, but were reproved by God, because they sought out what was new. Therefore, if the Mass is the most divine (of institutions), it should be found in divine decrees. If indeed it is not there, but has been instituted by the Devil, and brought to us via the papistical cesspool, and preserved until now thanks to blind custom, with the result that it completely dispossesses the Lord’s Supper, let men leave off defending it, or (at</p>
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⁹⁵ Matthew 26:39. Ascham’s wording matches Erasmus and the Vulgate.

⁹⁶ The second part of Matthew 26:39, against following the wording of Erasmus the Vulgate, though the former omits the final *vis*, unlike Ascham and the Vulgate.

⁹⁷ An episode referred to in Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:51 and John 18:10-11.

⁹⁸ 2 Corinthians 12:7-8. Ascham conflates two verses and his Latin verb *auferret* departs from the use of the verb *discedere* by both the Vulgate and Erasmus.

⁹⁹ Revelation 22:8. Ascham’s Latin wording does not match the Vulgate or Erasmus both of which employ the perfect tense of the verb *cado* and use *ante pedes*. However, his striking verb *prostravit* seems to echo Lutheran notions of man’s degeneracy.

<p><i>Quamobrem, si Missa via hominis est, [Missa via hominis] quod negari non potest, & omnis via hominis, quantumvis [Prov.14] recta in conspectu eius sit, extremum tamen eius tendat ad mortem: [Deuter.12] & cum Dominus iubet, ut homo non faciat quod sibi rectum videtur: nemo aequus vir putabit me iniquum facere, quod protestor me repudiare in hac disputatione omnem humanam doctrinam, quae nimium semper tribuit humanis inventis. Solo igitur verbo Dei hanc rem decidamus.</i></p> <p><i>Sanctae Catholicae Ecclesiae me etiam [Ecclesia] subiicio: illa enim semper verecunde & timide audit vocem sponsi sui, iuxta illud, [Ioan.10] Oves meae vocem meam audiunt.</i></p> <p><i>[25] [Bv] Patres libenter amplector, & recipio [Patres]: doctrina enim ex veteri memoria plena antiquitatis, plena dignitatis existit: sed recipio patres, ut ipsi iubent se recipi, hoc est, si contineant se in sua ditione, & non immigrent in possessionem verbi Dei. Et hoc docet Augustinus, [August] respondens Cresconio Grammatico, qui nitebatur auctoritate epistolae Cypriani: Ego (ait Augustinus) huius epistolae auctoritate non teneor, quia literas Cypriani non ut Canonicas habeo, sed eas ex Canonicis considero: & quod in eis divinarum scripturarum auctoritati congruit, cum laude eius accipio: quod autem non congruit, cum pace eius respuo. Et Nic. De Lyra, de Hieronymo dicit [Lyra.1.Matthew]: Nec debet aliquis moveri, si ego recedo a dictis Hieronymi, quia dicta sanctorum non sunt tantae auctoritatis, quin liceat sentire contrarium in hiis quae non sunt per sacram Scripturam determinata. Quanquam quomodo patres nostrae controversiae iudices esse possunt</i></p>	<p>least) let them rush forth to fight for it - something they are unable to do - using the arms of Christ, not those of the Pope. On this account, if the Mass is the way of man and, something which cannot be denied, the way of man in its entirety, even though it may seem right in his eyes, in the end it may extend to death.¹⁰⁰ And when the Lord orders that man ought not to do what seems right to him,¹⁰¹ no reasonable person will think that I speak unjustly because I testify¹⁰² in this disputation that I scorn all human doctrine which always attributes too much to man's inventions. Therefore, let us settle this matter with the Word of God alone. I make myself subject to the sacred Catholic Church¹⁰³, for she always modestly and timidly hears the voice of her own bridegroom, just as in that saying 'My sheep hear my voice'.¹⁰⁴</p> <p>I gladly embrace the Fathers and receive them¹⁰⁵ for doctrine from old times is full of authority and full of gravity. But I receive the Fathers as they themselves order that they be received, that is, if they contain themselves within their own jurisdiction and do not enter into a possession of the Word of God. Augustine teaches this in his answer to Cresconius Grammaticus¹⁰⁶ who was relying on the authority of a letter of Cyprian. Augustine says 'I am not bound by the authority of this letter because I have a letter of Cyprian which does not accord with the canon, and I consider that to fall outside the canon. And the contents of it which are consistent with the authority of divine Scripture I receive with praise of him, however, those which are not so (consistent) I reject with his pardon'. Nicholas of Lyra speaks about Jerome: 'Nor ought anyone be moved if I depart from the writings of Jerome because the words of the saints are not of such great authority that it is permissible to suppose the opposite in these matters which have not been (so) determined through holy Scripture'.¹⁰⁷ Yet¹⁰⁸ I don't see how the Fathers are to</p>
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¹⁰⁰ Proverbs 14:12 Ascham's quote is very different to the Vulgate wording which has *est via quae videtur homini iusta novissima autem eius deducunt ad mortem*.

¹⁰¹ Deuteronomy 12:8. Ascham uses some of the vocabulary used in the Vulgate.

¹⁰² Note the rather loaded connotation of this word (*protestor*) which gives us the term 'Protestant'.

¹⁰³ The margin note highlights Ascham's discussion of the Church here.

¹⁰⁴ John 10:27. Ascham's wording matches Erasmus and the Vulgate.

¹⁰⁵ The margin note highlights 'the Fathers'.

¹⁰⁶ Augustine in answer to Cresconius, the Donatist layman and grammarian who was alleging the authority of St Cyprian's epistle: *Ad Cresconium*, a work of four volumes.

¹⁰⁷ *Postillae perpetuae in universam S. Scripturam*, Matthew 1:3. Nicholas of Lyra was a medieval commentator on the Bible; his approach to exegesis was a literal one. He was distinctive among his predecessors and contemporaries for quoting relatively little from the Fathers. He mildly criticized Jerome's translation of a verse of Matthew and stated

<p><i>non video, cum in nullo patre ullum vestigium vestrae Missae existat. Si quis me ad Questionistas, [Questionistae] hoc est, ad Papistici regni licentiam, & libidinem</i></p> <p><i>[26] abducere velit, rationes audiam, nec contemnam, modo illae sacrae scripturae auctoritatem non contemnant. Ad vivos accedimus, ubi imprimis dedo me, & omnem meam dedico disputationem iudicio, auctoritati, & gratiae illustrissimi Principis nostri, Edovardi sexti, [Rex Edovardus Sextus] Domini mei clementissimi: & hoc facio eo libentiori animo, quod hic Rex virgo primus omnium nostrae memoriae Regum merito esse dicatur, qui ab omni non labe solum, sed suspicione etiam fornicationis cum meretrice Babylonica purus & integer virgo existat. Dedo me etiam nobilissimo Duci Edovardo Somersettensi, [Dux.Som.Cancel.Cantab] Academiae nostrae Cancellario dignissimo. Et dedo me huic eruditissimae Academiae, [Academia Auditores] & iudiciis omnium illorum astantium, qui veram cognitionem ex fontibus scripturae, non ex faecibus humanae & papisticae doctrinae hauriendam esse putant. Propterea, fretus primum Christi spiritu, & eius doctrina: tum Regis nostri praesidio & gratia: probabo, quod Missa non caena Dominica. [Caena Dominica a Christo in novo Testamento instituta] In novo Testamento caena Dominica a Christo instituitur: discipuli interrogant Christum,</i></p> <p><i>[27] ubi parent illi Pascha ad comedendum: Christus ostendit, illi faciunt quemadmodum praecipit illis Christus, & inveniunt (inquit scriptura) quemadmodum dicit illis Christus. Nostri Missatores qui nesciunt, non interrogant: qui sciunt, non faciunt quod illis constituit Christus: & propterea, neutri</i></p>	<p>be the arbiters of our controversy when there is not any trace of your Mass in any Father. If anyone wishes to lead me¹⁰⁹ away to the questionists,¹¹⁰ that is, to the licence of the papistical dominion and its wantonness,</p> <p>I will hear his arguments, nor will I slight them, provided that those don't slight the authority of sacred Scripture. But we come to those who live now, where I principally surrender myself and dedicate my entire disputation to the judgement, authority and the grace of our most illustrious sovereign, Edward the Sixth, my most merciful Lord. And this I do with an altogether gladder heart for the fact that this King is justly claimed to be the first virgin King of all Kings in living memory, who is a virgin pure and free not only from every defect but even from any suspicion¹¹¹ of fornication with a 'Babylonian whore'.¹¹² I also surrender myself to the most noble Duke Edward of Somerset, the very worthy Chancellor of our University. And I surrender myself to this most learned University¹¹³ and to the judgement of all those standing here who think that true knowledge must be derived from the fountains of Scripture, not from the dregs of human and papistical doctrine. Therefore, relying firstly on the spirit of Christ and his doctrine, and then on the protection and grace of our King, I will demonstrate that the Mass is not the Lord's Supper. In the New Testament, the Lord's Supper is instituted by Christ.¹¹⁴ The disciples ask Christ</p> <p>when they should prepare for him the Paschal lamb for eating. Christ shows the way; they do just as Christ instructs them and they find it (Scripture says) just as Christ tells them. Our Mass-makers¹¹⁵ who don't know, do not ask; those who do know don't do what Christ has decreed for them, and for that reason neither find out in</p>
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that he agreed with only some of Ambrose's reasons regarding a particular issue, as outlined in P.D.W. Krey and L. Smith (eds.), *Nicholas of Lyra, The Senses of Scripture* (Brill, 2000), pp.219-220.

¹⁰⁸ *quanquam* is a common rhetorical particle of transition in objections made by a speaker, used by Cicero in particular.

¹⁰⁹ The Latin verb *abducere* can have negative connotations of reducing and degrading as used by Cicero.

¹¹⁰ *Questionista* is not a Classical Latin word, but in the medieval sphere of disputations it described a 'questionist', namely a candidate for the BA degree in his final term, so called from the degree requirement of participating in disputed questions; they were also referred to as 'schoolmen'. Ascham seems to associate questionists with papists and the margin note highlights his reference to the questionists.

¹¹¹ The *errata* changes the word Latin *suspicatione* to *suspicione*.

¹¹² This evidently means that Edward is free of papistry.

¹¹³ The margin note refers to the 'The audience at the University'.

¹¹⁴ The margin note emphasizes his point that 'The Lord's Supper instituted by Christ in the New Testament'.

¹¹⁵ I translate *Missatores* as 'Mass-makers'.

inveniunt, quemadmodum dixit Christus: sed utrique fingunt quod volunt, iuxta illud Psalmi, Populus qui non audit vocem [Psal.80(i)] Domini ibit post inventiones suas. Nos caenam solam Dominicam agnoscimus, quae a Domino in scripturis traditur: cuius integra institutio, & partes singulae quomodo sunt per invectionem Missae violatae, passim in oratione nostra demonstrabimus. Nunc ad Missam omnem sermonem nostrum conferemus. Missa in Missali instituitur: [Missa ubi instituta] actio eius, & scena tota qualis sit, Sacerdotes quotidie missantes declarant. Si aequus iudex legeret Evangelium, legeret Missale, & quantum inter se discrepent perspiceret: de hac nostra controversia facile statueret. Si inspectaret Christum sedentem cum discipulis, cum tanta humilitate, cum tanta simplicitate, apertum & planum sermonem habentem, frangentem

[28] panem dividendum inter singulos, & poculum porrigentem singulis, praecipientem ut illi etiam sic facerent, & hoc testamentum eius ultimum servarent, & non tanquam Testamentarii diminuendo & addendo mutarent: si Christum (inquam) hoc serio agentem, serio animo suo versaret, & e regione [Sacerdos Mimicus] cerneret sacerdotem nostratem solum proreptantem ex sacrario ad Altare, & illic stantem solum aversum a populo, cum vestibus histrionicis, gesticulationibus Mimicis, aemulationibus simiacis, & prophanationibus impiis, murmurantem nescio quid sibi, dantem sibi, distribuentem sibi, privatissime, secretissime omnia agentem sibi, & solum omnia devorantem sibi: age tu quisquis es, qui nostratem sacerdotem cernis, & Christum in Evangelio unquam contemplatus es, responde bona fide, si in nostra Missa Christum agnoscere potes. Responderet talis aequus vir certo scio, Ecce omnia facta sunt nova: profecto hii

what manner Christ has spoken, but both fashion what they want, just as that saying in the Psalm ‘People who pay no heed to the voice of the Lord will go after after their own inventions’.¹¹⁶ We recognise only the Lord’s Supper which is handed over to us in Scripture by the Lord; its perfect arrangement and how its individual parts have been violated through the introduction of the Mass we will demonstrate throughout our speech. Now we will direct our entire speech to the Mass. The Mass is established in the Missale.¹¹⁷ Its process and what its entire character¹¹⁸ consists of priests, who daily perform the Mass, demonstrate. If a reasonable judge was to read the Gospel, read the Missale, and was to examine the extent to which they differ, he would easily settle this controversy of ours. If he were to observe Christ sitting with his disciples with such great humility, with such great simplicity, delivering an open and plain speech, breaking

the bread (and) dividing it up between individuals and offering a drinking-cup to each person and directing that they also act thus, to preserve this, his last testament, and not to alter it by taking it apart and adding to it as if they were makers of wills.¹¹⁹ If, I say, he was to turn over in his serious mind Christ acting in this serious matter and could see in the opposite direction¹²⁰ a native priest¹²¹ rushing forth alone from chapel to altar and standing there alone with his back to the people,¹²² with his actor’s garb and farcical movements, gross zeal¹²³ and wicked profanations, mumbling I don’t know what to himself and giving to himself, apportioning to himself, in utmost privacy and ever so secretly doing everything for his own benefit and devouring everything for himself alone;¹²⁴ come, you, whoever you are, who perceives a native priest and has ever given regard to Christ in the New Testament, respond in good faith as to whether you are able to discern Christ in our Mass. Such a reasonable man, would, I know for certain,

¹¹⁶ Psalm 80:12-13 (V/GS) / 81:11-12 (H/P). Ascham has already made reference to this above on p.20.

¹¹⁷ The margin note clarifies that Ascham is addressing the issue of ‘The Mass – where it is established’

¹¹⁸ *scena* = *scaena* which also means ‘a scene’ in a theatre. This choice of word surely reflects Ascham’s view of the Mass as a piece of theatre.

¹¹⁹ The term *Testamentarii* can connote forgery too (as below).

¹²⁰ *regio* might also refer to a province in a parochial sense here.

¹²¹ The margin note here indicates that Ascham is describing ‘A farcical Priest’. The second word of the margin note (*mimicus*) is a word used in Cicero *de Oratore* 2.59.239.

¹²² The second word of the margin note at this point (*mimicus*) is a word used in Cicero *de Oratore* 2.59.239 and can be translated as ‘farcical’.

¹²³ *simia* is a noun meaning ‘an ape’, usually a form of abuse.

¹²⁴ Ascham allows the sentence to practically finish without really completing it, as though to indicate how the shocking actions of the priest have caused him to lose track.

<p><i>Missatores, (diceret) Testamentarii sunt, super addunt, diminuunt, mutant Testamentum Domini, ut suum inducerent. Si Testamentum Domini est, quare mutatis? Si</i></p> <p><i>[29] non mutatum esse dicitis, impudenter negatis, & impudentia vestra superat scelus vestrum: si mutare licet vobis, dicitis, unum verbum, unam syllabam, unam literam, imo unum mitum a Domino, & quicquid vultis per nos faciatis. Quod non licet mutare quicquam, satis commovere vos debuit: quia Testamentum Domini est. Sed quia libentius soletis doctores sequi, quam sermones Domini, audite quid doctissimus doctor, & sanctissimus pater Cyprianus [Cyprian. 20 lib.Epis.] de non mutanda hac caena Dominica loquitur [Epis.3]: Diabolus enim tum temporis hanc confusionem miscere cepit. Ait Cyprianus: Si in sacrificio quod Christus est, non nisi Christus sequendus est, utique id nos obaudire & facere oportet, quod Christus fecit, & quod faciendum esse mandavit, cum ipse in Evangelio suo dicat: Si feceritis [Ioan.15] quod mando vobis, iam non dico vos servos, sed amicos. Et quod Christus debeat solus audiri, pater etiam de coelo contestatur dicens, Hic est filius dilectissimus, [Matt. 17] in quo bene sensi, ipsum audite. Quare, si solus Christus audiendus est, non debemus attendere quid aliquis ante nos fa-</i></p> <p><i>[30] ciendum putaverit: sed quid, qui ante omnes est, Christus prior fecerit. Neque enim hominis consuetudinem sequi oportet, sed Dei veritatem: cum per Isaiam prophetam [Isa.29] Deus loquatur, & dicat: Sine caussa autem colunt me, mandata &</i></p>	<p>respond (as follows): ‘Look everything that has been done is novel. Assuredly these Mass-makers (he would say) are forgers of the Testament;¹²⁵ they add something more to the Testament of the Lord, they take it apart and change it in order that they might introduce their own’. If it is the Testament of the Lord, why do you change it? If</p> <p>you say that it has not been changed, you are shamelessly in denial and your ignorance exceeds your crime. If it is permitted, you say, to change one word, one syllable, one letter, indeed one jot¹²⁶ (written) by the Lord and whatever you wish, you should do it through us. That it is <u>not</u> permitted to change anything ought to move you sufficiently because it is the testament of the Lord. But because you are accustomed to follow the Fathers more willingly than the words of the Lord, heed what the most learned Doctor and most sacred Father Cyprian says about not changing this Lord’s Supper.¹²⁷ For the Devil undertook to stir up this confusion at that time. If¹²⁸ Cyprian says ‘in the sacrifice which is Christ, only Christ is to be followed’, assuredly, it behoves us to obey and to do that which Christ did, and what he ordered must be done, since he himself says in his own Gospel ‘If you do what I command to you, I do not now speak to you as servants but as friends’.¹²⁹ That Christ alone ought to be heeded, even his Father is called as a witness from heaven saying ‘This is my very beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Hear him’.¹³⁰ Wherefore, if Christ only must be heeded, we ought not to pay any attention to what someone before us</p> <p>thought must be done, but to what Christ, who is before everyone, originally did. And nor is it right to pursue the custom of man but the truth of God, since God speaks through the prophet Isaiah and says: ‘Indeed, without good reason do they worship me when they teach the commandments and doctrines of men’.¹³¹ And</p>
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¹²⁵ *Testamentarii* is used in the sense of forgery by Cicero in *pro Sestio* 17.39 and *de Officiis*, 3.18.73.

¹²⁶ *mitum* is a Latinised Greek word μῖτος (mitos), literally meaning ‘a thread’.

¹²⁷ Cyprian, Epistle 3, book 2 /63. The two hanging notes appear to refer to the quote from Cyprian: *Si in sacrificio quod Christus est, non nisi Christus sequendus est*, though the book is actually 2 not 20.

¹²⁸ In this translation, I have assumed the *si* belongs in a protasis with *ait* as it is not in the original quote and makes better sense here.

¹²⁹ John 15:14-15. In the Vulgate, Erasmus, Tyndale and Luther, the protasis (if clause) comes second.

¹³⁰ Matthew, 17:5 (also quoted above on p.19). Erasmus has ...*in quo mihi bene complacitum est* and the Vulgate has *compalculi*. Ascham has *sensi*, also used by Cyprian in his letters, vol.3, part 3.

¹³¹ Ascham’s quote bears some resemblance to the sentiment of Isaiah 29:13, ‘And the Lord said: For, so moch as thys people when they be in trouble, do honour me wyth their mouth and with theyr lypes: but their herte is far from me, & the feare which they have unto me, procedeth of a commaundment that is taughte of men’ (as per the Great Bible), but

doctrinas hominum docentes. Et iterum Dominus in Evangelio hoc idem repetit dicens: Reiicitis mandatum Dei, ut traditionem vestram statuatis. Sed & alio in loco ponit, & dicit: [Matt.5] Qui soluerit unum ex mandatis istis minimis, (attendite quaeso, doctissimi viri, quid Cyprianus dicit, & quomodo dicit:) Qui (inquit) soluerit unum ex mandatis istis minimis, & sic docuerit homines, minimus vocabitur in regno coelorum. Quod si nec minima de mandatis Dominicis licet solvere: quanto magis tam magna, tam grandia, tam ad ipsum Dominicae passionis & nostrae redemptionis sacramentum pertinentia, fas non est infringere, aut in aliud quam quod divinitus institutum sit, humana traditione mutare? Nam si Iesus Christus dominus & Deus noster, ipse est summus sacerdos Dei patris, & sacrificium Deo patri ipse primus obtulit, & hoc fieri in sui commemo-

[31] rationem praecepit, utique ille Sacerdos vice Christi vere fungitur, qui id quod Christus fecit, imitator. Hactenus Cyprianus, qui si in illis purioris Ecclesiae temporibus iustam causam habuit, tam vehementer & tam acriter invehendi in Testamentarios caenae Dominicae: quid si deus nobis de coelo mitteret nunc Cyprianum, & praeter faeces, quibus tunc faedata fuit caena, totam etiam sentinam Papisticam in eam influxisse cerneret, & licentiam ac libidinem posterioris Ecclesiae animadverteret, ubi semper tantum licuit quantum libuit, tantum libuit quantum cuius Papae, & indocto Questionistae placuit: quid diceret Cyprianus? Opinor profecto nesciret quid diceret, cum nullum vestigium, non Christi dico, sed ne sui temporis reliquum esse cerneret. Quibus temporibus, & per quos homines, caena Dominica de possessione sua per Missam deturbata sit, [Inventio Misse] verissime sciri non potest. Nec mirum est: nam Diabolus non uno seculo, nec uno viro ad tantam rem abusus est. Praeterea Diaboli astutiae prudentiores sunt, quam ut à quovis pcipipossint:

again the Lord in the Gospel repeats this same point, saying ‘You reject the commandment of God in order that you may establish your own tradition’.¹³² And indeed he posits this point in another place and says ‘Whoever shall violate one of these least commandments’ (pay heed, I ask, learned men, to what Cyprian¹³³ says and how he says it): ‘Whoever (he says) shall violate one of these least commandments and shall teach other men accordingly shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven’. If it is not lawful to violate even the least of the Lord’s commandments, by how much more is it not right to break such great, such weighty matters which are so pertinent to the sacrament of the Lord’s passion and our redemption, or to change it with human tradition into something other than what has been divinely instituted? For if Jesus Christ - Lord and our God – is himself the highest priest of God the Father, and he himself was the first to offer a sacrifice to God the Father and

instructed that this be done in remembrance of him, assuredly that priest properly performs in the place of Christ, someone who does what Christ did as an imitator. Thus far Cyprian, who if in those times of a purer Church had just cause to inveigh so vociferously and bitterly against the forgers of the Lord’s Supper, what if God were now to send Cyprian to us from heaven and, he were to see, in addition to the dregs by which the Supper has hence been defiled, the entire papistical bilgewater that has flooded into her and were to note the licentiousness and wantonness of the later Church, where always so much was allowed as was pleasing, and so much was pleasing as seemed proper to any Pope and untutored questionist you like, what would Cyprian say? I certainly think that he would not know what to say when he were to observe that no trace was left, not of Christ, I say, but not even of his own time. And it is not possible to be known with all certainty at which times and through which men the Lord’s Supper was driven out from its rightful place on account of the Mass.¹³⁴ Nor is it surprising, for the Devil has not made use¹³⁵ of one century or one man for so great a matter.

is actually from Matthew 15:9. There are many points of nexus between Matthew’s Gospel and the Old Testament Isaiah, and Ascham may have had these in mind.

¹³² Mark 7:9. Again, Ascham does not seem to be following the wording of the Vulgate or Erasmus here (which have *irritum facitis praeceptum dei, ut traditionem vestram servetis* and *reiicitis praeceptum dei ut constitutionem vestram servetis* respectively), but Cyprian (in *De Lapsis*).

¹³³ Cyprian quoting Matthew 5:19.

¹³⁴ The margin note reads: ‘The Mass, an invention’.

¹³⁵ The verb *abutor* can be used in a rhetorical context in the sense of using improperly.

<p><i>puto tamen originem Missae, partim ex sacrificiis illis</i></p> <p>[32] <i>demanasse, quae impii sacerdotes Iudaei supra modum auxerunt & instituerunt Baal. Contra hos cultus & sacerdotes clamant omnes Prophetae, quia praeter Dominum & verbum eius instituti sunt. Si comparabimus cum his Papam, & eius contra verbum Christi audaciam, quid nos sentire, quid existimare debemus? Si quis dicit Papam nec voluisse, nec potuisse, nec ausum esse novum cultum fingere, hic certe aut Papam non novit, aut Papam defendere didicit: Sed Papam relinquamus.</i></p> <p><i>Existimo etiam magnam partem Missae [Magna pars Misse ex gentibus profluxit] ex Gentibus in nostram religionem profluxisse. Nec Missam solum, sed ingentem turbam illarum ceremoniarum quoque, quibus nunc Ecclesia Dei misere premitur, & in varias contentiones distrahitur: quod facile colligi ab eo potest, qui in legendis monumentis vetustissimorum Graecorum versatus est. Pro Missa vero sacrificatoria propugnanda hoc vere possum dicere, non tantum ex tota Scriptura colligi posse, quantum ex prima Tragoedia Euripidis, apud quem, Sacrifici cuiusdam haec verba sunt:</i></p> <p>[33] [C] [Talthybius apud Euripidem in Hecaba, actu tertiorrefert Hecaba haec verba Pyrrhi Achilles filii sacrificantis Polyxenam.] <i>πλῆρες δ' ἐν χερσὶν λαβὼν δέπας πάγχρυσον, εἶπεν: ὦ παῖ Πηλεΐως, πατήρ δ' ἐμὸς, δέξαι χόας μοι τὰςδε, κλητηρίους, νεκρῶν ἄγωγους. πᾶς δ' ἐπηύξατο στρατὸς (plēres d'en cheroïn labōn depas pangchruson, eipen: ō pai Pēleōs, patēr d'emos, dexai choas moi tasde, kēlēterious, nekrōn agōgous. pas d'epēuxato stratos). Accepto poculo aureo in manibus dixit, Pater mi, suscipe haec sacrificia placatoria, mortuorum deductoria: & universus populus adstans adprecatus est: & alia quae sequuntur. Et hoc in</i></p>	<p>On that account, the crafts of the Devil are more intelligent than may be anticipated by anyone you like. I think, however, that the origin of the Mass has derived in part from those sacrifices</p> <p>which wicked Jewish priests increased beyond due measure and established at Baal.¹³⁶ All the Prophets cry out against these venerations and priests because they were established beyond the Lord and his Word. If we compare with these men the Pope and his audacity against the Word of Christ, what ought we to feel, what ought we to think? If anyone says that the Pope was neither willing, nor able, nor dared to fashion a new form of veneration, this man, without a doubt, either does not know the Pope or has learnt to defend the Pope. But let us leave the Pope for now.</p> <p>I also think that a large part of the Mass has flowed forth from pagan nations into our religion, and not only the Mass, but also a whole host of those ceremonies by which now the Church of God is wretchedly oppressed and torn apart into various controversies. It is possible to gather this easily from any man who has engaged himself in reading chronicles of the most ancient Greeks. For truly, as regards the defence of the sacrificial¹³⁷ Mass, I can say this in all honesty that it is not so much able to be gathered from the whole of Scripture as from the first tragedy of Euripides in which these are the words of a certain sacrificer:</p> <p>[Talthybius according to Euripides in the Hecuba: in the third Act reports to Hecuba these words of Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, as he is sacrificing Polyxena].¹³⁸ 'Having taken in his hands a golden goblet full to the brim,¹³⁹ he said "O son of Peleus, my father, receive these appeasing drink offerings of mine which draw forth the dead". And the whole army prayed'. ['Having taken a gold cup in his hands, he said "My Father, receive these placatory sacrifices for drawing forth the dead" and the whole crowd present worshipped and other things which follow']. And (I present) this as a favour to those who search for some Scriptural basis for the Mass. We are not concerned so much about the origin of the Mass in</p>
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¹³⁶ Note the hysteron-proteron of *auxerunt* and *instituerunt* here in order to emphasise the increase.

¹³⁷ *sacrificatoria* is not a classical Latin word nor listed in the Revised Medieval Latin Word-list, though it is perfectly possible to infer Ascham's meaning.

¹³⁸ These lines correspond to parts of Euripides' *Hecuba* (lines 530 – 542), the part in the play where Polyxena is just about to be sacrificed.

¹³⁹ This would be used for the purpose of making a libation to Achilles in anticipation of the sacrifice of Polyxena.

<p><i>gratiam eorum qui aliquam scripturam pro Missa requirunt. De origine Missae apud alias gentes [Origo Missae nostrae in Anglia] non tantum laboramus: quomodo vero irrepsit in Angliam, hoc certo scimus. Augustinus Anglorum apostolus qui nominatur, [Augustinus Anglorum Apostolus] profligator verae religionis, & fundator omnis Papisticae doctrinae, scribit ad Gregorium Papam, quaerens quomodo Missam in Angliam constituerit, cum tam multiplices formae missandi, in Gallia & Italia, extiterint. Gregorius rescribit, ut nec Romanum nec Gallicum morem sequeretur, sed quicquid ille ipse sequendum</i></p> <p><i>[34] esse duceret. An hii successores Apostolorum sunt? Apostoli interrogabant Christum, quomodo Pascha illi pararent. Apostoli fecerunt sicut Christus illis constituit. Paulus quod accepit a Domino, hoc tradidit Corinthiis: & Gregorius quod Augustinus voluit, hoc tradidit Anglis. Vide Paulum, qui non aliam in Ecclesia viam sequutus est, quam quae ab ipso Domino praemonstrata est. Vide etiam hunc Gregorium, & hunc Augustinum, qui praecipites feruntur in omnem licentiam condendi & recondendi Missarum vias pro arbitrato suo. Quamobrem, si omnem memoriam colligamus ab eo tempore, cum Diabolus primum Corinthiis caenam Domini adimere cepit, (quod innuit Paulus cum ait, Hoc non est caenam Domini comedere.&c.) ad hunc usque diem in quo nunc vivimus: si consideremus etiam, non solum Augustini factum, sed omnem illam etiam incredibilem libidinem Papistici regni, sub quo Diabolus vetus odium, & novum laedendi studium exercuerit, mirum profecto non est, si aliquis Anglus hodie hanc Pauli vocem usurpet, Iam non est Caenam</i></p> <p><i>[35] [Cii] Domini comedere in Anglia, quoniam eius in locum irrepsit idolum privatae Missae papisticae.</i></p>	<p>other nations, but indeed how it has infiltrated England¹⁴⁰ we know this for certain. Augustine,¹⁴¹ who is named as an apostle of the English, squanderer of true religion and founder of every papistical doctrine, writes to Pope Gregory, asking how he should institute the Mass in England since so many versions of performing the Mass had sprung up in France and Italy. Gregory writes back that he should follow neither the Roman way nor the French way, but but whatever he himself deems to be followed.</p> <p>Are these the successors of the Apostles? The Apostles used to ask Christ how they should prepare the Paschal lamb. The Apostles did just what Christ had determined for them. What Paul received from the Lord, this he passed on to the Corinthians. And what Augustine wanted, Gregory passed (this) on to the English. Consider Paul who followed no other route in the Church than that which was pointed out by the Lord himself. Then consider this man Gregory and this Augustine who, in their haste,¹⁴² rush¹⁴³ into every licence of constructing and re-constructing the ways of the Mass according to their own judgement. Wherefore, if we piece together every historical account from that time when the Devil first lured the Corinthians to give up the Supper of the Lord (something which Paul hinted at when he said ‘This is not to eat the Supper of the Lord, etc.’¹⁴⁴) right up till the present day in which we now live; if we were now also to consider not only that deed of Augustine but also that whole incredible wantonness of the papal kingdom, beneath which the Devil has administered an aged hatred and a new zeal for causing harm, it is certainly no wonder if any Englishman today employs this dictum of Paul, namely ‘Now there is no consuming of the Lord’s Supper in England’ since the form¹⁴⁵ of a private, papistical Mass crept into its place.¹⁴⁶</p>
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¹⁴⁰ The margin note highlights the fact that Ascham is now dealing with ‘the origin of our Mass in England’.

¹⁴¹ Not Augustine of Hippo, the Church Father, but rather the Roman monk sent to convert Britain to Catholicism. The margin note refers to him as ‘Augustine, Apostle of the English’.

¹⁴² I have treated this as a syncopated form of *praecipitantes* from the verb *praecipito*.

¹⁴³ *Feruntur* is used in the middle sense.

¹⁴⁴ Ascham is quoting Paul from 1 Corinthians 11:20 here. He has not used the vern *manducare* of the Vulgate or Erasmus’s verb *edere*, but the compound form *comedere*, as he does throughout his work in the context of the Supper.

¹⁴⁵ Ascham will have certainly used the word *idolum* deliberately to remind the readers of the idols which were then the targets of so many attacks.

¹⁴⁶ A striking manipulation of Paul’s words here.

<p><i>De nomine Missae multi nimium, [Nomen Missae] nemo satis ad certam eius explicationem dixit. Missa Syrorum verbum est, ab Hebraeis raro usurpatum, tributum populi: nec inepte, in initio, hoc nomen caenae Dominicae attributum fuit, propter preces & laudes, quae sunt vectigalia piae mentis. Missam etiam Latini sibi vendicant, a dimittendis Cathecumenis, vel dimittenda plebe cum res peracta est, & sic Cicero aliquando, missus Senatus est. Missa missus coelestis, hoc est, ferculum coeleste. Missa, quia minister mittit preces: vel Missa, quia Christus factus hostia iam a sacerdote, mittitur per angelum quendam ad Patrem, ut pro nobis intercedat: sed hoc scholasticum & impium est. Et vide licentiam hic nimis effluentem Missariorum nostrorum: nam nolunt volunt ostendunt, quod sacrificium in Missa sua intelligunt. Habet in suo libro Missali, imaginem sacerdotis missantis: sacerdos elevat puellum nudum supra caput per talos & imos pedes, puellus</i></p> <p><i>[36] veluti saltans suprà digitos sacerdotis, καὶ ἀεροβατῶν (aerobatōn) & illic pendulus supplices manus tendit Patri sedenti sublime in coelo. Si Divus Augustinus cum lucerna verbi Dei hanc imaginem examinaret, quid diceret? Imo quid non piceret? Sed respondet aliquis, Quid nobis cum pictoribus atque Poetis? Nihil dicit. Nam cum consilio Missariorum hoc factum est, & iam silentio ac consensu illorum idem comprobatum est. De Missae</i></p>	<p>Concerning the name of the Mass¹⁴⁷, many men have said too much, but no one has said enough as regards a definite explanation of it. ‘Mass’ is a Syrian word, used occasionally by the Jews as a contribution of the people. And not inappropriately was this name attributed¹⁴⁸ in the beginning to the Lord’s Supper, on account of prayers and praises which are the imposts¹⁴⁹ of a devout mind. The Latins also lay claim¹⁵⁰ to the Mass for themselves from the ‘sending away’ of the Cathecumans or from the ‘sending away’ of the people when the business was completed and, in this way, Cicero sometimes refers to the Senate as ‘having been dismissed’.¹⁵¹ (But) the Mass as a heavenly ‘sending’, that is, a divine vehicle¹⁵²; the ‘Mass’ because a minister sends prayers; or the ‘Mass’ because Christ having become a host is now sent by a priest through some angel to the Father with the result that he intercedes on our behalf? This is scholastic and wicked. Just witness here the licence of our Massers¹⁵³ now overflowing beyond measure. For they present willy-nilly the sacrifice that they understand in their own Mass. He has in his own book – the Missale, the image of a priest performing the Mass; the priest elevates above his head a naked little boy¹⁵⁴ by his ankles and the tips of his feet and,</p> <p>suspended there, stretches his suppliant hands to the Father sitting loftily in heaven. If Saint Augustine were to scrutinise this image with the light of the Word of God, what would he say? Assuredly, what, but that he was painting?¹⁵⁵ But someone responds: ‘What are painters and poets to do with us?’¹⁵⁶ He says nothing. For this has been done with the counsel of the supporters of the Massers and now the same has been sanctioned with the silent consensus of those men. That’s enough</p>
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¹⁴⁷ The margin note clarifies Ascham is here speaking about the ‘Name of the Mass’.

¹⁴⁸ I have tried here to reflect Ascham’s use of the etymologically related *tributum* and *attributum* by translating these as ‘contribution’ and ‘attributed’ respectively.

¹⁴⁹ *vectigalia* is interesting word to use here, literally meaning tax or impost (perhaps following on from *tributum* used above).

¹⁵⁰ *vendicant* - also *vindico* in Classical Latin.

¹⁵¹ It is unclear where Cicero actually uses this phrase, though he refers to *senatu dimisso* in *Laelius De Amicitia* 3.12. Pliny the Younger refers to the senate being *missus* and subsequently *revocatus* in *Epistles*, 2.11.

¹⁵² The Latin for ‘vehicle’ (*ferculum*) also denotes something that food is carried on and this nuance of the word would not be out of place here.

¹⁵³ *Missarii*: I differentiate this term from *Missator* by translating it as ‘Masser’.

¹⁵⁴ For those who believed in transubstantiation, in the miracle of the Mass, the wafer of bread was transformed into both a child and a man.

¹⁵⁵ I have translated this on the assumption that there is a misprint and the verb *pingo*, ‘I paint’ (which can also come to mean ‘I deceive’) was intended. It is unlikely to be from *pico*, -are, meaning ‘bedaub with tar’. (There is, of course, an Italian verb *piacere*, meaning to please, but there is a reference to ‘pictoribus’ in the next sentence).

¹⁵⁶ *pictoribus atque poetis* is an exact phrase from Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, line 9.

nomine satīs, sed adiungam etiam meam sententiam. [Aschami sententia de Missa] Vocatur iam Missa, quia digna est ut omnes eam missam faciant: vos rem ipsam, non nomine, quod olim habuit: sed pondere scelerum, quae Missa nunc invexit, Missam penditote. Si vetustas nominis res depravatissimas commendaret, recipiantur quiete hostes invadentes in Rempublicam, quia nomen hostis plausibile [Cic.officiorum.1] apud maiores nostros fuit Cicero docet. Quid vituperemus fures aut furtum, cum olim fures & famuli idem essent? [Thucyd.1.] Et apud Thucydidem, placide homines interrogantur, sint-ne fures vel mercatores. Sed quoniam hostes &

[37] [Ciii] fures non solum non constiterunt in abusu nominis, sed prolapsi sunt in apertum scelus: licet nomen vetus obtinent, novum tamen odium apud omnes commorentur. Et quod quidam hodie honesti, sed nimis tepidi dicunt [Abusus nullus in Missa]: Agnoscimus abusus in Missa, num igitur tolletur Missa? Omnes abutuntur sole, num igitur tolletur sol? Nihil est quod dicunt. Nam scelera Missarum hoc nomen abusus non capit. Non constitit in abusu Missa, sed effudit se contra Testamentum Domini. Pro sole respondemus. Sol est clarissimum donum Dei: boni utuntur bene, mali abutuntur male. Sed quid nunc? Si quis eam potentiam haberet, ut tolleretur e mundo solem, & in eius locum reponeret vel candelam, vel viridem (ut vulgus loquitur) caseum, & id quicquid esset, nomine solis appellaret: quis ferret? quis toleraret? Aristoteles diserte (ut omnia) docet, in rerum usu & tractione has quatuor res saepenumero consequi, γένεσιν, χρῆσιν, ἀποχρῆσιν, φθορὰν (genesin, chrēsin, apochrēsin, fthoran) 1. ortus rei, usus, abusus, interitus. Exemplum rem ob oculos ponit. Nummus regius

about the name of the Mass, but I will also add my own opinion.¹⁵⁷ It is now called ‘the Mass’ because it is proper for everyone to perform that Mass. But you, think about the Mass, the thing itself, not in terms of the name which it once had, but in terms of the weight of the crimes which the Mass has now introduced.¹⁵⁸ If the age of the name were to commend such depraved matters, the invading enemy may just as well be quietly received back into the Republic because, as Cicero teaches, the name of ‘enemy’ was acceptable among our ancestors.¹⁵⁹ Why should we find fault with thieves and theft when once upon a time ‘thieves’ and ‘servants’ were one and the same? And in Thucydides, men are gently questioned as to whether they are thieves or merchants.¹⁶⁰ But since enemies and

thieves have not only not stopped in the abuse of the name, but have fallen into an obvious crime; albeit they are in possession of an old name, (however), they deserve new hatred among everyone. And certain honourable men say this today, but say it too half-heartedly¹⁶¹ ‘We perceive the misuses in the Mass; the Mass should surely not accordingly be removed? Everyone misuses the sun; the sun should surely not accordingly be removed?’ What they say amounts to nothing. For this term ‘misuse’ does not capture the crimes of the Masses. The Mass has not halted in abuse, but has unleashed itself against the Testament of the Lord. Now we (will) respond in support of the sun. The sun is the most glorious gift of God. Good men use it judiciously, bad men misuse it shamefully. But what now? If anyone had the power to take the sun away from the the world and put in its place either a candle or a ‘green cheese’ (as the plebs refer to it) and called that thing— whatever it be – by the name of the sun, who would put up with it? Who would tolerate it? Aristotle eloquently (as in all things) teaches that in the use and handling of matters these four things follow time and time again – [Greek genesis, use, misuse, corruption]

¹⁵⁷ The margin note indicates that this is ‘Ascham’s opinion concerning the Mass’.

¹⁵⁸ Note that *vos eam (rem) suo, non nominis pondere penditote* is from Cicero’s in *Verrem* 2.4.1. *penditote* is a legalistic future imperative.

¹⁵⁹ Cicero in book 1.37 of *De Officiis* discussed the former connotations of the word *hostis*: ‘for “enemy” (*hostis*) meant to our ancestors what we now call “stranger” (*peregrinus*)’.

¹⁶⁰ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, book 1.5.

¹⁶¹ ‘No misuse in the Mass’ is an odd hanging note given Ascham is arguing precisely the opposite, but it must refer to what he proceeds to state, namely that this term ‘misuse’ does not capture the crimes of the Mass.

<p>[38] <i>cuditur, & hic ortus eius est, boni utuntur ad commoditatem, mali abutuntur ad libidinem: perditissimi recidunt suo more, & adulterinum faciunt, & ad tempus nomen regii nummi habet, cum nihil minus quam regium sit: sic Missa habuit ortum suum, habuit usum, perpressa est abusum, nunc tota adulterina est, faciem & figuram caenae Dominicae nullam retinet. Itaque, si illustrissimus Iosias noster Numularii periti officium susciperet, & vocaret ad se hos Missatores, quaereretque ab illis ubi sint characteres illi & formae quibus Missa illorum cuditur, & iuberet ut proferant in conspectum: intellegite quid dico, si non characteres Missarum, quas venditant, a Papa & ab homine formari deprehenderentur, subiiciat me Rex cui vult supplicio. Vide impudentiam Missatorum, adulterinas Missas suas exponunt: si quis vir cautus & circumspectus dubitet de figura an sit Dominica, exclamant Missarii, Regium nummum contemnit: tum miser ille non audet frangere, non audet penitius intueri, & ita non potest probare, nec audet dicere quod verum esse novit: & sic</i></p> <p>[39] <i>[Ciiii] Missatores nunquam probant Missam suam esse bonam, sed compellunt reliquos ut taceant, nec dicant eam esse malam. Verum si Rex quaereret ab illis, quare sic soli missant, & per quod praeceptum Domini, offerunt illi, & comedunt reliqui: per quem scripturae locum applicant mortuis: profecto aut Papam & eius doctrinam defenderent, aut nihil omnino dicerent. Precor Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, ut Rex Edovardus noster cogat eos probare esse bonum quod aliis imponunt, nec improbent alii quod male</i></p>	<p>[(1) the birth of the thing, the use, the abuse and its ruin].¹⁶² An example brings the matter before our eyes. A king's coin</p> <p>is hammered into form, and this is its genesis. Good men use it for convenience, bad men misuse it for their own pleasure. The most morally corrupt recoin it according to their own caprice and make a counterfeit coin and in time it assumes the name of the King's coin, when in actual fact there is nothing less 'royal'!¹⁶³ And in this way, the Mass had its genesis, had its usage, it suffered misuse, and now the whole thing is a counterfeit and retains nothing of the appearance and form of the Lord's Supper. Thus, if our most illustrious Josias was to take up the office of a skilful coiner and was to summon to himself these Mass-makers and was to seek from them where those features and forms by which their Mass is hammered out are (from) and was to order them to make it public, understand what I say: if no features of the Masses which they keep peddling, are discovered to be fashioned by the Pope and by man, let the King subject me to whatever punishment he likes. See the impudence of the Mass-makers and their own counterfeit Masses that they turn out! If any cautious and circumspect man has doubts about its form and whether it is 'of the Lord', the Massers cry out that he undermines the royal coin. Then that wretch doesn't dare to break it, doesn't dare to examine it more fully and thus is not able to prove (anything), nor dares to say what he knew to be true. And thus</p> <p>Mass-makers never prove that their Mass is good, but they compel the rest to stay silent and and not to say that it is bad. But, if the King was to seek from them on what account they alone perform the Mass and through which commandment of the Lord they make sacrifices and the rest eat and through which part of Scripture they connect with the dead, certainly, they would either defend the Pope and his doctrine or say nothing at all. I pray to our Lord Jesus Christ that our King Edward forces them to prove that what they impose on others is good and that it be not for others to reject what they do</p>
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¹⁶² Aristotle Περί γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς (Peri geneseōs kai Phthoras) (*De Generatione et Corruptione*) in which he posits the notion of the four causes.

¹⁶³ This appears to have been a particularly topical analogy: in Somerset's reign, some of the most urgent problems which needed addressing were the debased coinage inherited from the previous reign and the heavy counterfeiting which had become so prevalent: Dewar, M., *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (London, 1964) p.49. Ascham may have had this in mind, but also had a general interest in coins and their purity: in 1553, he sent a gold coin to Cecil, referring to the metal as 'very pure and workmanship skilful'; and in a letter to Cheke of the same year, to the durability of gold coin ((L) G:vol.1, 149/V&H:51A, 1553 and (L) G: vol.1, 140/V&H:140, 1553 respectively).

<p><i>faciunt: sed probent ipsi Missatores quod bene faciunt. Et tantum de nomine Missae. [Species Missae quatuor] Missa dividitur in quatuor species: invitus facio (doctissimi viri) quod iam implebo aures vestras meris inanitatibus: sed patienter tolerate: nam doctrinam Missatorum, quam illi docent, audietis.</i></p> <p><i>[40] Dividunt Missam suam hoc modo, in has quatuor species.</i> <i>Missa In Festis. {Sanctorum. {Temporum.</i> <i>Missa In {Feriis 1.2. {Nocte 3 {Die 4 {Octavis 5 {Vigiliis 6 {Tempore Galli cantus {Aurore[sq e] {Meridiei</i> <i>Missa De {Dedicatione {Consecratione {Reconciliatione {Ecclesiae In {Altam {Humilem {Publicam {Privatam.</i> <i>Missa De {Deo {Divinis {Angelis {Trinitate {Spiritu sancto</i> <i>De {Nominem Iesu {Cruce {Quinque vulnerib. {Corona Christi.</i> <i>Contra {Mortalitatem hominum }</i> <i>Pro {Praesentibus. {Animalibus {Mortuis {Absentibus {Benefactoribus {Hominibus Vivis {Parentibus {Pregnantibus [sq e] {Navibus {Peregrinantibus. {Et multis aliis rebus {Includendis. & c.</i></p> <p><i>[41] [Cv] Missa etiam dividitur in partes suas: Partes:</i> <i>{Essentiales (Semper enim haec insunt omni Missae) {Officium. {Psalmus. {Kyrie eleeson. {Collecta {Epistola. {Graduale {Versus {Evangelium (Offertorium. (Secretum. (Canon. (Post-communio. {Accidentales (Aliquando adsunt, aliquando absunt, praetor Misae corruptionem</i> <i>{Gloria patri. {Gloria in excelsis. {Sequentia. {Alleluia. {Tractus. {Credo. {Elevatio {Pax Domini {Benedicamus Domino. {Ita Missa est.</i></p> <p><i>At clamat Missator aliquis: An-non haec verba Domini sunt? An-non ex ipsa Scriptura collecta? An-non omnia ad veritatem, ornatum, & decus comparata? O diabolicam astutiam, qui semper transformat se in Angelum lucis! Quid est hoc Transformat? Formam & venustatem semper induit,</i></p>	<p>badly, (and) that it be for the Mass-makers themselves to prove what they do well. And so much about the name of the Mass. The Mass is divided into four types. I act unwillingly (very learned men) inasmuch as I will now fill up your ears with unadulterated worthlessness. But bear it patiently for you are about to hear the doctrine of the Mass-makers which those men teach.</p> <p>They arrange their Mass in this way into these four types:¹⁶⁴ Mass: in festivals - {of saints {of appropriate times (of the year) On / at: {days of rest -1.2 {night -3 {day - 4 {eighth days - 5 {vigils - 6 {the time of: {cock-crow {dawn {midday Mass about: {the dedication {the consecration {Reconciliation {Of the Church Unto: {Heaven/high {the needy {public {private Mass about: {God {the divine {Angels {Trinity {Holy Spirit About: {the Name of Jesus {the Cross {five wounds {crown of Christ. Against: {the mortality of man For: {the present {animals {the dead {the absent {benefactors {living men {parents {the pregnant [and what follows] {ships travelling {& many other things for inclusion etc.</p> <p>The Mass is also divided into its own parts. The Parts: Essentials - For always these are part of every Mass: {Ceremony {Psalm {Kyrie Eleison {Collect {Epistle {Gradual {Verses {Gospel {Offering {Mystery {The canon {Post-communion Inessentials - Sometimes these are present, sometimes absent, together with the corruption of the Mass: {Glory to the father {Glory in excelsis {Subsequent things {The alleluia {A homily {The Credo {The Elevation {Peace of the Lord {Let us bless the Lord {The dismissal</p> <p>But some Mass-maker cries out: But are these not the words of the Lord? And aren't these words gathered from Scripture itself? And surely haven't all such things been established for the purposes of truth, ornament and glory? O diabolical cunning, someone who always transforms himself into the Angel of light!¹⁶⁵ What is</p>
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¹⁶⁴ In the printed version, there is a carefully laid out chart with all this information.

¹⁶⁵ This is a reference to 2 Corinthians 11:14. Ascham's verb *transformat* differs from Erasmus's version and the Vulgate which use *transfiguratur* and *transfigurat* respectively.

<p><i>nec vulgarem sed</i></p> <p>[42] <i>cum Deo semper communem, ut sensus hominum inanes verbi Dei decipiat. Si Missa sponsam Christi spoliatur, ornamentis Scripturae sese decorat, ut se pellicem Caenae dominicae efficiat: omnes pellices ita faciunt, gestiunt incedere spectabiles ornamentis verarum matronarum. Sed lasciviam & scortationem Missae in alio loco melius demonstrabimus: interim tamen, vide haec ipsa ornamenta, quibus se iactat & ostentat Missa, quanta insolentia, quanta libidine hiis abutitur, ut nulla syllaba verbi Dei in tota Missa existat, quam non vitiat & adulterat vel peregrina lingua, vel mollis symphonia, vel inanis gesticulatio, vel secreta murmuratio. Et tamen, si Missa habet aliquem fucum quem venditet, in hiis extremis quasi vestibulis eius cernitur: nam si interiora Missae penetremus, si cordis sedem, si fellis locum, si latebras & recessus omnes eius peragrarere velimus, quem non faectorem, quae non monstra intus ali cerneremus? verum, si in animum eius etiam invadere voluerimus, ut intima consilia, ut fraudes mentis, ut insidias voluntatis Missae conspiceremus, & haec Omnia</i></p> <p>[43] <i>in conspectum (ut perspicue agnoscantur) produxerimus, non dubito quin vox omnium communis existit: Ecce Missa Papae, quae tollit caenam Domini: Ecce vulpes Papae, quae devorat agnum Dei: Ecce idolum Papae, quod auget scelera mundi. Et ingredienti mihi in hunc latissimum campum scelerum Missae, exploratus introitus, perdifficilis vero exitus apparet. Circundabo me certis finibus, & hii tamen fines latissime patent. Decalogum Domini mihi proponam, cuius partes universas violavit haec vestra Missa: & orationem meam ordine praeceuntem, melius intelligentia vestra ordine consequetur.</i></p>	<p>this: does he transform himself? He always assumes beauty and charm, never vulgar but</p> <p>always compatible with God in order that he deceives the senses of men (now) without the Word of God. If the Mass despoils the bride of Christ, it adorns itself with the trappings of Scripture with the result that it makes itself a harlot of the Lord's Supper. All harlots act in this way: they long to go about visible in the trappings of true women of rank. But we will better demonstrate the lewdness and whoredom¹⁶⁶ of the Mass in another place. Meanwhile, however, behold these trappings themselves with which the Mass flaunts and parades itself and with what great insolence and with what great wantonness it misuses these things so that no syllable of the Word of God exists in the whole of the Mass which either a strange language, or soft symphony, or an empty gesture, or a mysterious murmur does not corrupt and defile.¹⁶⁷ And yet, if the Mass has another disguise to offer, it is seen in these outer, as it were, clothes of it. For if we were to penetrate¹⁶⁸ the interior parts of the Mass, if we wished to search the seat of the heart, if we wished to search the place of the gall-bladder, if we wished to search all its hidden places and recesses, what, but a stench, and what, but abominations, would we discern within to be fed (there)? In truth, if we also wanted to invade its mind in order to perceive the inmost motivations, the duplicity of its judgement, the snares of the will of the Mass, and if</p> <p>we set out all these things in full view (so that they might be clearly recognised), I do not doubt that the common cry of all would be 'Behold, the Mass of the Pope which removes the Lord's Supper! Behold, the foxes of the Pope which devour¹⁶⁹ the lamb of God! Behold, the idol of the Pope which adds to the sins of the world'. And for me, upon entering into this extensive field of crimes of the Mass, once the entrance has been discovered,¹⁷⁰ to be sure, the way out seems very difficult. I will confine myself within fixed boundaries, however even these boundaries lie open most extensively. I will set forth for myself the Ten Comandments of the Lord, all parts of which this Mass of yours has violated. And as my speech leads the way</p>
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¹⁶⁶ *scortationem* is not strictly a classical Latin noun, but has been formed from the verb *scortor* meaning 'to associate with harlots'. The two nouns *lasciviam* and *scortationem* were used by Calvin in his *Institutes*, book 4, chapter 1.

¹⁶⁷ The language Ascham uses here seems deliberately designed to sound sensuous and carnal.

¹⁶⁸ *penetrare* in Classical Latin.

¹⁶⁹ A singular verb (*devorat*) with collective plural noun.

¹⁷⁰ This would be better as an ablative absolute in the Latin.

<p><i>Non habebis Deos alienos coram me.</i></p> <p><i>Primum mandatum est, ut unum solum Deum cognoscamus, & illum solum adoremus. An Deus sit adorandus, de hoc contendimus? Imo, hoc nos unice cupimus. Et hic impudentissimi sunt omnes</i></p> <p><i>[44] Papistae, qui exclamant Deum non adorari, nisi ficto quovis humano cultu adoretur. Profecto, omnes hoc vident in Scripturis, Deum non alio crimine gravius irritari, quam cum adoratur alio modo quam ille requirit. Tota Scriptura nihil aliud est. Hoc, praecepta omnia docent: hoc exempla monent: hoc, supplicia Dei infinita clamant. Audi clarissimum exemplum. [Levit.10] Nadab & Abiu filii Aaronis summi sacerdotis, thuribulis imposuerunt ignem & incensum desuper, afferentes coram Domino ignem alienum, quod eis praeceptum non erat, egressusque ignis a Domino devoravit eos, & mortui sunt. Et miror quod Sacrifici, filii Papae, summi sacerdotis, non perterrefacti sunt hoc exemplo, sed adorant, suo invento, sacramentum quod eis praeceptum non erat. Utinam & in hoc loco etiam Rex noster vocaret ad se Missatores, & quareret: Quo iure compellunt populum adorare sacramentum? Quomodo sciunt hoc placere Deo? Quomodo non summopere displicere Deo, cum alienam adorationem, quam ille non praecepit, semper in scriptura abhorruerit? Si hanc adorationem retinendam esse dixerint,</i></p> <p><i>[45] adferant unum mandatum Domini, unum Apostolorum exemplum, unum ecclesiae primariae usum, unum Apostolicae doctrinae verbum: sed mandatum Domini nullum est, exemplum Apostolorum in caena, nihil tale arguit, usus Apostolicae ecclesiae vel in Arctubus Apostolorum expressus, vel a Paulo Corinthiis traditus, ne vestigium quidem adorationis ostendit. Ecclesia vetus non iubet, imo prohibet: nam vetuit Nicena Synodus, ne nimis humiliter attentus esset populus ad</i></p>	<p>in (a particular) order, (so) in turn, your understanding will follow more effectively.</p> <p>‘You will not hold other Gods in my presence’¹⁷¹</p> <p>The first commandment is that we acknowledge one God alone and worship him alone. Do we dispute this - whether God is to be worshipped? Indeed, we desire this utterly. And here, most foolish are all the</p> <p>Papists who shout aloud that God is not worshipped unless worshipped by any old false and human-based veneration. Indeed, everyone sees this in Scripture that God is not more gravely provoked by any other crime than when he is worshipped in a way other than that which he asks for. The whole of Scripture is nothing else. This, all injunctions teach; this, examples advise; this, infinite entreaties of God cry out. Listen to a most clear example. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, the highest priest, placed fire and incense above their censers, offering a strange fire before the Lord which was not prescribed for them and fire emitted by the Lord devoured them and they died.¹⁷² And I wonder that the sacrificers, the sons of the Pope, the highest priest,¹⁷³ have not been absolutely terrified by this example, but worship, by their own devising, a sacrament which had not been prescribed for them. Would that even in this place also our King would summon (to himself) the Mass-makers and seek (from them) by what right they coerce the populace to worship the sacrament. How do they know that this is pleasing to God? How (do they know) that it does not cause God the utmost displeasure since he has always in Scripture abhorred an alien adoration¹⁷⁴ which he has not prescribed? If they respond that this ‘adoration’ must be retained,</p> <p>let them produce one commandment of God, one example from the Apostles, one use in the primitive church, one word of Apostolic doctrine. But there is no commandment of the Lord; the example from the Apostles in the Supper proves nothing of the sort; the practice of the Apostolic Church, either as it is expressed in the Acts of the Apostles or as it is recounted by Paul to the Corinthians, indicates not even a trace of adoration. The old Church does not order this, in fact it prohibits it. And the Nicean Synod forbade it</p>
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¹⁷¹ Exodus 20:3/Deuteronomy 5:7.

¹⁷² Leviticus 10:1-2. Ascham’s wording matches the Vulgate almost exactly.

¹⁷³ Interestingly, Ascham repeats this, having just applied the term to Aaron. Aaron was the priest in the Old Testament to have made a blood offering.

¹⁷⁴ Again, Ascham clearly had in mind the act of Eucharistic adoration. I translate this noun as ‘adoration’ or ‘form of worship’, depending on which sounds better in the sentence.

<p><i>proposita Symbola. Et hodie etiam canimus, Sursum corda, quod monet quomodo Deus adorari debet. Si adoratio sacramenti, est res in nostra religione maximi momenti (quod multi homines ita esse credunt, cum in nulla alia re tantam curam & cautionem adhibent:) certe damnabimus vel Christum negligentiae, qui non praescripserit: vel Apostolos impietatis, qui esum potius sacramenti, quam adorationem, celebrarint: vel Ecclesiam primariam invidiae, quae tantam rem tanto silentio obruerit: & Synodum Nicenam hereseos, quae hoc ipsum aperte vetuerit: sin adoratio sacramenti res sit minimi momenti, cur maximas contentiones de ea re excitamus?</i></p>	<p>lest the the people were too abjectly attentive to the signs placed before them. And even today we sing the ‘sursum corda’¹⁷⁵ which advises how God ought to be worshipped. If the adoration of the sacrament is a matter of the greatest significance in our religion (which many men believe that it is since in no other matter do they apply such great care and caution), we will certainly damn either Christ who did not prescribe this for negligence, or the Apostles who celebrated¹⁷⁶ the eating of the sacrament rather than the adoration for their wickedness, or the primitive Church which concealed in utter silence such an important matter for its ill-will, and the Nicene Synod which openly forbade this very thing for its heresy.¹⁷⁷ But if the adoration in the sacrament is a matter of minimal significance, why do we stir up the greatest controversies about it?</p>
<p><i>[46]Age, tu adoras, ego non adoro: videamus uter securior esse debet. Ego comedo corpus, bibo sanguinem, facio omnia in comemorationem Christi, nihil libenter omitto quod Christus instituit, nihil temere suscipio quod Christus non praecepit, & intra fines sermonis eius totum meipsum contineo. Ego securus sum, qui a mandato Dei non deflecto, & interim audio vocem [Ioan.8.] Domini dicentem, Si manseritis in sermone meo, veri discipuli mei estis, & cognoscetis veritatem. Tu uteris caena Dominica more tuo, addis etiam adorationem sacramenti, non malo fortasse proposito: sed an Deus hoc vult, nescis: & quod Deus hoc non iussit, certo scis. At qui facit quod Deus non iubet, potissimum in novo cultu excogitando, caveat ne illud Ieremiae de eo dicatur: Quis est iste qui hoc facit [Iere.Lamen.3], Deo non iubente? Caveat, ne illa supplicia ei immineant, quae Deus novae adorationis inventoribus, semper praeparat. At si meum consilium sequeris, omitte orare, quod imperita pietas docuit: & incipe solum amplexari, quod certissima veritas instituit. Omitte nimiam tuam pietatem quae</i></p>	<p>Come, you engage in adoration; I do not engage in adoration. Let us see which one ought to be more secure. I eat the body, I drink the blood, I do everything in remembrance of Christ, I willingly omit nothing which Christ instituted, I rashly admit nothing which Christ has not prescribed, and I keep myself¹⁷⁸ totally within the bounds of his Word. I am secure in that I do not deviate from the commandment of God and, meanwhile, I hear the voice of the Lord saying ‘If you remain in my Word, you are true disciples of mine and you shall know the truth’.¹⁷⁹ You use the Lord’s Supper according to your own custom, you even add adoration of the sacrament – perhaps not a bad idea - but whether God wants this you do not know, but that God has not ordered this you do know for certain. But he who does what God does not order, especially in devising a new form of veneration, let him beware lest that maxim of Jeremiah be said of him ‘Who is this man who does this when God does not order it?’¹⁸⁰ Let him beware lest there hang over him those punishments which God always has at the ready for those who invent a new form of worship. But if you follow my advice, let off pleading what ignorant piety has taught and begin to embrace only what the surest truth has instituted. Leave</p>

¹⁷⁵ The *sursum corda* (Latin for ‘Lift up your hearts’) is the opening dialogue to the preface of the Eucharistic prayer. It was a sentiment embraced by those of Reformed faith: D. MacCulloch, ‘Fifth Latin Doctor of the Church?’ in I. Backus and P. Benedict (eds.), *Calvin and his Influence, 1509-2009* (New York and Oxford, 2009), p.41.

¹⁷⁶ *celebrarint* is a syncopated form for *celebraverint*.

¹⁷⁷ There is a Greek omega in the middle of this word (in the Latin).

¹⁷⁸ *me* and *ipsum* are merged in the printed copy.

¹⁷⁹ John 8.31-32. This follows the wording of the Vulgate and Erasmus.

¹⁸⁰ Jeremiah Lamentations 3:37, though Ascham’s wording differs from the Latin of the Vulgate which has *Quis est iste qui dixit ut fieret domino non iubente*, meaning ‘Who is he that has commanded a thing to be done when the Lord commandeth it not?’

<p>[47] <i>saepissime displicuit: & sequere perfectam Christi institutionem, quae certam securitatem habet: nam qui tenet quod Christus monuit, qui observat quod docuit, qui facit quod ille fecit, etiamsi de suo nihil addat, se tamen Christo placere intelligat. Sacerdos elevat, populus adorat, quae res nec Domini praeceptum, nec Apostolorum exemplum, nec Ecclesiae usum ullum habet. At solus Deus adorandus est, & Deum nemo vidit unque. Quid ergo adoramus quod videmus, cum solus Deus sit adorandus, quem nunque videmus? Vide quomodo Papistae abusi sunt elevatione. Sacerdos Leviticus [Levit.23] solebat res manibus suis elevare, quas populus ad sacrificium apparasset: hinc incredibili audacia sacrifici nostri sacramentum corporis & sanguinis Christi proponunt populo, non ut comedat carnem Domini, quod Dominus instituit: sed ut videat & adoret tantum, quod Christus non praecepit. Si Deum adorare vis, consuetudinem vulgi, omnium errorum diversorium, relinque: & ducem illum, qui rectissima via existit, sequere. Deus spiritus est, (inquit Christus) & adorantes [Ioan.4]</i></p> <p>[48] <i>eum oportet adorare in spiritu & veritate. Et quicquid cernitur, non est spiritus: ergo, quod cernitur non adorari debet: sed, quod sacerdos elevat, cernitur: ergo, quod sacerdos elevat, adorari non debet. Si in spiritu debemus adorare, cur in sensibilibus haeremus? si in veritate hoc facere, cur sine testimonio sermonis Dei, qui veritas ipsa est, hoc instituimus? Aut relinque sensum, & sequere spiritum: aut nega veritatem, & amplectere consuetudinem: nam aperte loquitur Christus: Pater, inquit, hos adoratores quaerit, qui spiritu & veritate adorant. Si tu ergo vis esse, quem Pater quaerit, adora tu illum quemadmodum ille praecepit, ne</i></p>	<p>off too much of your piety which</p> <p>has so very often displeased and follow Christ's perfected arrangement which has guaranteed security. For he who maintains what Christ has advised, he who attends to what he has taught, he who does what he has done, even if he adds nothing of his own, understands that he nonetheless pleases Christ. The priest elevates, the people worship, conduct which contains no commandment of the Lord, no example from the Apostles, nor any practice of the Church. But God alone must be worshipped and no one ever¹⁸¹ sees God. Why therefore do we worship what we see when only God must be worshipped, God whom we never¹⁸² see? See how Papists have misused the elevation. The priest Leviticus was accustomed to elevate things with his hands which the people had provided¹⁸³ for sacrifice.¹⁸⁴ Hereupon, with extraordinary impudence, our sacrificers expose to the populace the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ not so that they may eat the flesh of the Lord, as the Lord instituted, but so that they may only see and worship that which Christ has not prescribed. If you wish to worship God, leave off the custom of the common people, the refuge of all errors, and follow that leader who comes forth from the most upright way. God is the spirit (says Christ) and it behoves worshippers</p> <p>to worship him in spirit and truth.¹⁸⁵ And whatever is seen is not the spirit, therefore, what is seen ought not to be worshipped. But what the priest elevates is seen, therefore, what the priest elevates ought not to be worshiped.¹⁸⁶ If we ought to worship in spirit, why do we cling fast to the things perceived by the senses? If (we ought) to do this in truth, why have we instituted this without the testimony of the Word of God who is truth itself? Either abandon the senses and follow the spirit or deny truth and embrace custom. For Christ speaks clearly: his Father, he says, seeks these worshippers who worship in spirit and truth. Therefore, if you want to be someone whom the Father seeks,</p>
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¹⁸¹ *unque* = *umquam*.

¹⁸² *nunque* = *numquam*.

¹⁸³ *apparasset* is a syncopated form of *apparavisset*.

¹⁸⁴ Leviticus 23:20, though the Vulgate wording is slightly different: *cumque elevaverit eos sacerdos cum panibus primitiarum coram Domino*...('and when the priest has lifted them up with the bread of the firstfruits before the Lord...').

¹⁸⁵ John 4:24. Ascham broadly follows the Vulgate and Erasmus, though both of these have the relative *eos qui adorant eum* in place of Ascham's present participle *adorantes* which surely follows the participle in the Greek - προσκυνουντας (*proskunountas*).

¹⁸⁶ Note Ascham's use of syllogism here.

Christus dicat tibi, Adoras quod nescis: nam quod facis, ne tuearis consuetudine: sed quod facere debes, discere ex praecepto Dei. Sed dicis: Si comedo Christum in sacramento, quare non adorabo sacramentum? Imo, quare adorares? & quo praecepto Domini adorares? potius considerare debes. Sed respondeo: Recipio Christum in Prophetam, quare Prophetam non adorem? nam qui recipit Prophetam, recipit Christum qui mittit Prophetam.

[49] [D] Age, si recipis Prophetam, si vesceris sacramento, bene facis, quia Dominus iubet: si neutrum adoras, non male facis, quia contra praeceptum Domini nihil facis. At iterum dicis: ubi corpus Christi, illic anima: Ubi anima, illic divinitas: & divinitas ubicunque est, adorari sane debet. Si sic colligis, tum unaquaeque res adoranda est, quia per singulas res divinitas Christi fusa est. Sed adhuc perducis me longius, & dicis: Non de potentia divinitatis loquor, quae per singulas res permeat, sed de natura divinitatis, qua secunda persona constat, & sic coniungo corpus, animam, & divinitatem in sacramento: sacramentum igitur adorare debeo. Audi contra: Aut hanc concomitantiam veram esse per scripturam ostende: aut id nos docere, pro quo nullam auctoritatem habes, desine. Augustinus vero has res separari posse declarat [Augustinus]: quia tempus fuit, cum corpus Domini iacebat in sepulchro, anima descendebat in infernum, & divinitas se contulit in Paradisum. Neque tu dicas: Hoc nimis dictu absurdum est, quod tum sine omni absurditate factum est. Praeterea, divinitas divinam adorationem

[50] requirit, & tum facile consentimus, divinitas oculis non cernitur. Populus adorat quod cernit, & ex creatura idolum facit: dicit enim vulgus, Deum hodie vidi.

Augustinus ait, quod videtur panis est, quod fides

worship that man just as he prescribes lest Christ says to you ‘You worship what you know not’¹⁸⁷; for you should not maintain what you do through custom, but learn what you ought to do from God’s commandment(s). But you say: if I eat Christ in the sacrament, wherefore will I not worship the sacrament? On the contrary, why should you worship, and pursuant to which commandment of God should you worship, you ought rather to consider. But I respond: I receive Christ in the Prophet, wherefore should I not worship the Prophet? For he who receives the Prophet, receives Christ who sends the Prophet.

Come, if you receive the Prophet, if you eat the sacrament, you do well because the Lord orders it. If you worship neither, you don’t do badly because you do nothing which is contrary to the commandment of the Lord. But you say again: where the body of Christ is, there is the spirit; where the spirit is, there is divinity and divinity is everywhere and clearly it ought to be worshipped. If you make such connections, then every single thing must be worshipped because the divinity of Christ has been poured into every single thing. But you prolong me still further and say: I don’t speak about the power of divinity which can pervade every single thing, but about the nature of divinity about which the next person agrees and thus I unite the body, spirit and divinity in the sacrament; therefore, I ought to adore the sacrament. Harken to the contrary. Either demonstrate through Scripture that this corollary is true or leave off teaching us that for which you have no authority. Indeed Augustine declares that these things can be separated because there was a time when the body of the Lord was lying in the tomb, his spirit was descending into the depths of the earth and his divinity carried itself into Paradise.¹⁸⁸ And don’t you say it is too absurd a thing to say because at the time it was done without all absurdity. On this account, divinity requires divine worship

and at that point we easily agree (that) divinity is not seen with the eyes. The people worship what they see and make an idol from things created. For the common people claim that God is seen every day.

Augustine says that what is seen is bread and, because

¹⁸⁷ John 4:22. In Erasmus and the Vulgate the verbs are in the plural: *vos adoratis quod nescitis*, wording Ascham does himself use again on p.54.

¹⁸⁸ Augustine, letter 187, chapters 3-5.

postulat instruenda, panis corpus Christi est. Vulgus non fidem ad corpus Domini, quod intelligitur: sed intuitum ad panem, qui videtur, dirigit: sic, neque, corpus neque, divinitas a vulgo, sed panis, quem cernunt, adoratur. Et hunc errorem populi, alit, non tollit improbitas sacerdotum: nam si persuadeant plebem ut veniant ad elevationem, ut inspectent calicem, nullam aliam religionem, certe non tantopere requirunt. Et hic fremunt nonnulli, quia cum Augustino panem voco quod cernitur: cum illi dicunt nuda accidentia, sine subiecto, subiici oculis populi, & frangi manibus Sacrifici. Ubi hanc doctrinam hauriunt? Ex verbo Dei? Proferant. Ab Ecclesia? Falsum dicunt: nam omnes oves Christi, vocem eius audiunt. Itaque, aut comprobent Augustinum sequentem Paulum: aut quod illi obtrudunt, ex verbo Dei proferant: aut hoc totum, quicquid est, humanum inventum

[51] [Dii] esse cognoscant. At ait quis: Tantum tribuis Augustino? Augustinus adorationem carnis commendat. [August. Psal.98] Intelligo, novi locum, in Psalmum nonagesimum octavum. An iniuriam facio Augustino, si ego de illo dicam, quod ille ipse de Cypriano olim dixit? Non teneor eius autoritate, nisi scripturam adferat. Sed ego profecto sic non faciam, sed libenter sequar Augustinum: nam Augustinus nullam adorationem agnoscit, nisi quam a Domino in quarto Ioannis didicit, hoc est, ut adoret Deum in spiritu & veritate. Advertite Augustinum quomodo loquitur, ait enim: Scriptura dicit, Adorate scabellum pedum eius: & Scriptura dicit, Terra scabellum pedum meorum & Scriptura dicit, Suscepit terram de terra: & postea, cum de adoratione carnis loquitur, non ait scriptura dicit, sed quid? Ego invenio quomodo adorem. &c. Et tamen ego non dubito, quin hoc eius inventum, sit illud a Christo

faith needs to be provided for, the bread is the body of Christ.¹⁸⁹ The common people don't direct their faith towards the body of the Lord which is understood (with the mind), but direct their attention to the bread which is seen. And so, neither body nor divinity are worshipped by the common people but the bread which they see. And the wickedness of the priests feeds rather than removes this error of the people. For if they can persuade the common folk to come to the elevation and to look at the cup, they¹⁹⁰ are in need of no other form of religion, certainly not so much. On this point, several people make noises in disagreement because I, with Augustine, call what is seen bread, when those people say, without foundation, that simple accidents are brought to the people's eyes and broken by the hands of the sacrificer. From where do they draw this doctrine? From the Word of God? Let them bring it forth. From the Church? They speak falsely.

For all the sheep¹⁹¹ of Christ hear his voice. Therefore, they should assent to Augustine who follows Paul, or they should bring forth from the Word of God what they thrust forward, or they should recognise that this whole thing, whatever it is, is a human invention.

But someone says 'You set so much store by Augustine? Augustine recommends the adoration of the flesh'.¹⁹² I understand – I know the place – it is in his ninety-eighth Psalm. But do I really insult Augustine if I say about him what he himself once said about Cyprian: I am not bound by his authority unless he relies upon Scripture.¹⁹³ I will certainly not do this, but gladly follow Augustine. For Augustine acknowledges no adoration except that which he learnt from the Lord in the fourth chapter of St. John, that is, to worship God in spirit and truth.¹⁹⁴ Observe how Augustine speaks, for he says: 'Scripture says: worship at the footstool of his feet'. And Scripture says 'the earth, the footstool of my feet'. And Scripture says 'he has taken up the earth from the earth'.¹⁹⁵ And afterwards, when he speaks about the adoration of the flesh, he doesn't say 'Scripture says it', but what? 'I find how I should worship etc.'. Nevertheless, I am in no doubt that this thing which has come to light of his

¹⁸⁹ Augustine, sermon 272.

¹⁹⁰ ie. the priests.

¹⁹¹ The *errata* in the printed version suggest this word *oves* should be added.

¹⁹² Psalm 99 (H/P). See Augustine's *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* in *Library of the Fathers* (Oxford, 1847), pp.453-455. On p.453, Augustine attempts to resolve the definition of a footstool by referring to it both as the earth and the flesh of Christ. He does add that this must all be spiritually understood (p.455).

¹⁹³ See above (p.25).

¹⁹⁴ John 4:24 (as above).

¹⁹⁵ Ascham's points broadly follow those of Augustine in his exposition of Psalm 99.

positum, Pater meus adoratores huiusmodi quaerit, qui spiritu & veritate adorant. Augustinus igitur in tam sublimi beneficio Christi, Deum solum propter se adorat: plebem vero res aspectabiles adorantem August. non confirmat.

[52] Vis adorare sacramentum? Hoc non docet Augustinus [Ad Quir.lib.3.cap.49], sed ut carnem adoraes, quam honora ut debes, & honora quantum vis: & hoc te docebit D. Cyprianus, non ea doctrina quam ex propria officina protulerit, sed quam ex sacrae scripturae spatiis excerpterit, hoc est: Quicumque, ederit panem, & biberit calicem Domini, hoc cogitet, quomodo indigne hoc non faciat. Et hanc adorationem libenter recipimus, illam vero populi nostri quotidianam, quam Diabolus excogitavit, hypocrisis in lucem indicavit, Romana Styx, non verbum Dei approbavit, & caeca consuetudo in nostra tempora conservavit, omnino reiicimus. Quae una res, caenae Dominicae institutionem, non solum ex hominum consuetudine, sed memoriam etiam omnem eius ex hominum sermone abstulit: nam dum elevationem Sacrifici timide & horride inspectant, dum sacramentum in pixide reverenter concludunt, dum in pompis suis solenniter circumferunt, dum his praestigiis oculos inaniter pascunt, usum, fructum, & memoriam caenae Dominicae ab animis suis secure deponunt. Et hic Deus duplicem a Diabolo

[53] [Diii] accepit iniuriam: primum, quod honor illi raptus est, & ad rem visibilem traductus: deinde, quod caena Dominica instituta ab illo, ad commemorationem sui, nunc convertitur in leve spectaculum vulgi. Si haec non sit idôlolatRIA, hoc est, permiscere rem divinissimam humana prophanatione, idôlolatRIam ego non intellego. Rogabo Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, ut aliquando Papistae patiantur diabolum iuste reprehendi, ut illi etiam revertantur ad cor, ut utrique nos simul glorificemus Deum eo cultu, qui &

may be that posited by Christ, (namely that) ‘my Father seeks worshippers of this sort who worship in spirit and truth’. Augustine, therefore, in such exalted service of Christ, of his own account worships God alone. Assuredly, Augustine is not evidence for the common folk’s worship of visible things.

Do you want to worship the sacrament? Augustine does not teach this, but that you should worship the flesh, honour it as you ought and honour it however much you want.¹⁹⁶ And St.¹⁹⁷ Cyprian will teach you this, not with that doctrine which he brought forth from his own workshop, but which he selected from parts of sacred Scripture, that is, whoever eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord ought to consider this - how he may avoid doing this unworthily.¹⁹⁸ And we gladly accept this form of worship, (but) that of our people which is done on a daily basis, (that) which the Devil devised and hypocrisy has brought into the light, the Roman Styx, (that) which the Word of God has not approved, and (that) which blind custom has preserved for our times, we reject it in its entirety. This one thing has not only removed the arrangement of the Lord’s Supper from men’s custom but has even removed all memory of it from men’s speech. For while the sacrificers look on the elevation of the sacrifice with timidity and dread, while they enclose the sacrament respectfully in a small box, while they solemnly carry it around in their processions, while they inanely gratify their eyes¹⁹⁹ with this magic, they firmly set aside the use, fruit and memory of the Lord’s Supper from their minds. And in this regard, God

has been in receipt of a two-fold wrong by the Devil. Firstly, inasmuch as honour (due) to him was snatched away and applied to something visible; and secondly, inasmuch as the Lord’s Supper which was instituted by him in remembrance of his Son²⁰⁰ is now being turned into a trivial spectacle of the common people. If this is not idolatry, that is, to mix a most divine thing with human profanation, then I don’t understand what idolatry is. I will ask our Lord Jesus Christ that at some point Papists should allow the Devil to be justly restrained, that they might also return to the heart, that

¹⁹⁶ Cyprian to Quirinus, book 3, chapter 49 (which refers to loving one’s enemies), though it not quite clear how this hanging note refers to the text.

¹⁹⁷ The ‘D’ denotes ‘divus’ meaning ‘divine’ or (here) ‘saint’.

¹⁹⁸ Cyprian, epistles 10 and 74 (according to the modern numbering) quoting 1 Corinthians 11:27.

¹⁹⁹ *oculos pasco* is a common formula in Classical Latin.

²⁰⁰ I have assumed *sui* is standing for *sui filii* rather than the genitive of *se* which would refer to himself.

<p><i>ex spiritu est, & ex verbo Dei est: tum vanas adorationes non sequeremur, quae commovent bilem Domino, sed cultum eum praestaremus Deo, qui λογικὸς (logikos) est [Romans.12], ut Pauli verbotar, qui mente & intelligentia viget, non in rebus sensibilibus inhaeret. Itaque, cum Deus in cultu suo zeloticus Deus est, nec cum altero quicquam communicat: cum novos cultus, novis semper suppliciis vindicat: cum securi sumus, si praeceptum a Domino amplectimur: cum securi esse non possumus, si nostras vias sequimur: rectam & certam caenae Dominicae institutionem cum Domino urgeamus, humanum vero & incertam</i></p> <p><i>[54] adorationem Missae una cum Papa & Diabolo abiiciamus. Et tum Christus non dicet nobis, [Ioan. 4.] Adoratis quod nescitis: sed nos in sermone eius manentes, servos suos vocabit [Ioan.8.]: & veritatem sequemur, quia facimus non aliter quam iussi sumus. Solus igitur Deus, non sacramentum, iuxta primum praeceptum Domini adorandus est.</i></p> <p><i>Non assumes nomen Dei in vanum.</i></p> <p><i>[In Missa vana nominis Dei usurpatio] Quam vana & inanis usurpatio nominis Dei in Missa quotidiana sit, minus intelligunt multi homines: quia in nulla alia re magis Papistae laboraverunt, quam ut reliqui nihil intelligerent, ipsi soli quid vellent, facerent. Si nulla alia res Missam condemnaret, certe vel haec una debuerat, quod nominis Dei, hoc est, bonitatis, virtutis, potentiae, & quicquid Deo attribui potest, creberrima usurpatio in Missa, minimum fructum plurimis sacerdotibus, inanem labiorum strepitum omnibus fere astantibus adferre solet: nam, non solum nomen Dei,</i></p>	<p>each one of us may at the same time glorify God with that veneration which derives from the spirit and the Word of God. Then we wouldn't follow meaningless forms of worship which provoke indignation in the Lord, but would exhibit that veneration for God which is reasonable²⁰¹, to use Paul's term,²⁰² and which thrives in the mind and understanding and does not cleave to things perceived by the senses. Consequently, since God in his own veneration is a jealous god and does not share anything with another; since he always punishes new forms of veneration with new punishments; since we are secure if we embrace what has been commanded by the Lord; and since we cannot be secure if we follow our own ways, let us urge on with the Lord the right and certain institution of the Lord's Supper and</p> <p>cast out the very human and uncertain adoration of the Mass together with the Pope and the Devil. And then Christ will not say to us 'You worship what you know not'²⁰³ but he will call those of us who stay within (the boundaries of) his word 'his servants'.²⁰⁴ And we will follow the truth because we act not otherwise than we have been ordered. Therefore, God alone, not the sacrament, must be worshipped, just as in the first commandment of the Lord.</p> <p>'Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain'.²⁰⁵ Many men don't understand at all how vain and unprofitable the daily use of the name of God in the Mass is.²⁰⁶ Forsooth, in no other matter have Papists worked more than that the rest should understand nothing and they themselves alone do what they want. If no other thing were to damn the Mass, this one certainly ought to have because the very frequent use in the Mass of the name of God, that is, of goodness, virtue, power and whatever can be attributed to God, is accustomed to bring about the least fruit for many priests and a unprofitable din of lips for almost all of those standing by. For not only the name of God</p>
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²⁰¹ The word λογικὴν (logikēn) is used in Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* 12:1. 'reasonable' is the translation of this word in the Great Bible, but it is related to the word λογος and connotes what is rational or logical.

²⁰² The printed version looks as though *verboutar* is all one word; I have divided up for sense.

²⁰³ John 4:22 as per Erasmus and the Vulgate.

²⁰⁴ Ascham is paraphrasing John 8:31; the translation in the KJV is 'If ye contynue in my worde, then are ye my very discyples'.

²⁰⁵ Exodus 20:7 or Deuteronomy 5:11. Note that Luther does not have as his second commandment 'You shall not make for yourself a graven image' (see chapter 3 of thesis).

²⁰⁶ The margin note reads 'The vain use of the name of God in the Mass'.

[55][Diiii] *sed omne verbum, quod non intelligitur, inaniter iactatur. Esaiam Prophetam adducere possum: D.Paulum proferre possum: sed hiis maiorem, & omnibus modis maximum, Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum audietis, non verba sua proferentem (nam verba Christi multi perditioni contemnunt) sed sensum verborum suorum explicantem. Ait Christus exponens parabolam, Omnis qui audit verbum Regni & non intelligit, venit nequam ille, & rapit quod seminatum est. Respondete Missatores, cur tot nomina, tot verba, Dei populo non intelligenti seminatis, ut Diabolus rapiat? Cur scientes hoc facitis? Quid habetis quod respondeatis, nisi quod Papa auctore hoc facitis? Intellegite quantum Christus, in parabola, discrepat a vobis, in vestra Missa. Christus hoc agit, ut omne verbum suum non aure solum percipiatur, sed corde etiam intelligatur: vos, ut omnia confusissima sint, permiscetis Syriacum, Hebraicum, Barbarum, Graecum, Latinum, cum vix sacerdos nedum populus intelligat Anglicum: deinde, altissimis symphoniis, organis, Mimicis gesticulationibus,*

[56] *secretis murmurationibus, occlusis cancellis, omnia comparatis ut nihil homines intelligant. Si Regia maiestas rationem huius rei a vobis postulare, aut nihil, aut impudenter respondebitis. Praeterea, quod verbum Dei magnam partem vel populo adimitur, vel aliena lingua, cum explicari debet, traditur, caret profecto omni exemplo Scripturae, doctrina Apostolica, Ecclesiae purioris usu, Doctorum consilio, mediocris rationis praesidio. Si exemplum quaeris, Moses & Prophetae omnia scripserunt, omnia populo proposuerunt vulgari lingua: cum tamen, si ipsi, in aliena lingua, verbum Dei continuissent, rationem certe aliquam sequuti fuissent: quia illa tempora quodam modo obscuritati & tenebris destinata erant. Doctrina Apostolica apertius praecipit, ut omnia tradantur planissima lingua, quam ut opus esset recensere, nisi quod*

but every word which is not understood is unprofitably tossed about. I am able to draw on the Prophet Isaiah.²⁰⁷ I am able to bring forth St Paul.²⁰⁸ But you will hear our Lord Jesus Christ, greater than these men, and the greatest in every way, not bringing forth his own words (and many corrupt men scorn Christ's words), but explaining the sense of his own words. Christ speaks expounding a parable: 'Everyone who hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, comes that vile one and makes an assault on what has been sown'.²⁰⁹ Mass-makers, answer – why do you sow so many names, so many words of God to a people who don't understand with the result that the Devil may make an assault (on them)? Why do you knowingly do this? What do you have which you can (use to) reply, except that you do this with the Pope as author? Understand how much Christ in the parable differs from you in your Mass. Christ does this so that the whole of his Word may not only be perceived by the ear but also understood by the heart. You, in order that²¹⁰ everything is totally thrown into confusion, mix up Syrian, Hebrew, the barbaric tongue, Greek, Latin when scarcely any priest, not to say the people, understand English! Then you furnish everything with the loftiest symphonies, organs, farcical gesticulations,

secret murmurings, closed-up enclosures, so that men understand nothing. If the royal sovereign were to demand the reason for this business from you, you will respond either nothing or impudently. Moreover, because the Word of God is either kept away for the main part from the people or a strange language is transmitted when it ought to be explained, it is assuredly devoid of every Scriptural example, Apostolic doctrine, the practice of a purer Church, the counsel of Doctors and the support of (even) a small amount of reason. If you are searching for an example, Moses and the Prophets have written everything and have made it all known to the people in every-day language. Although, however, if they themselves had enclosed the Word of God in a strange language, they certainly would have followed another (form of) reason(ing) because those times were destined in some measure to obscurity and

²⁰⁷ One of the parables from Matthew is cited. Parables that are said to be fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah (Matthew 13:14)

²⁰⁸ It is not clear why Ascham refers to Paul here as he proceeds to cite a parable from Matthew.

²⁰⁹ Matthew 13:19. The Vulgate and Erasmus have *malus* instead of *nequam* and the *in corde eius* has been omitted from the end.

²¹⁰ I have the *ut* to be functioning as a purpose rather than a result clause as it seems to be parallel to the previous *ut*.

<p><i>homines, dum tenebras defendunt, ipsis tenebris magis caeci existant. [I.Corinth.14.] Paulus ad Corinthios instat, urget, ut omnia intelligantur: qui unus locus pudorem adferret defensoribus Romanae religionis, nisi illi ipsi omnem pudorem sibi abstersissent.</i></p> <p><i>[57] [Dv] Nam quid vult Paulus per haec verba? In aerem loqui: Quid vobis prodero: Barbarus sum: mens omni fructu caret: omnia sint ad aedificationem: Quomodo, qui non intelligit, respondebit, Amen: ne sitis infantes: alienam linguam sectantes: Aliena labra: Aliena lingua est in signum infidelibus: Insanitis: Si non sit qui interpretetur, taceat qui loquitur linguis: iubet Paulus, & ait, Taceat. Quis ex nostris sacerdotibus obedivit unquam Paulo, & tacuit? Certe, aut Paulus cum nulla auctoritate hoc iussit, aut nostri sacerdotes cum summa impudentia non parent. Vellem libenter scire, quomodo Paulo respondent. Sed deficiunt scilicet a Paulo, & veterem Ecclesiam sequuntur? Graeci graece, Latini latine, singulae semper gentes sua lingua loquuti sunt. Nam aliena [Quid aliena lingua non intellecta uti] lingua non intellecta uti, nihil aliud est, quam ab humano sermone, ad inanem strepitum & garritum avium traduci. At consilium Doctorum multum movet. Iudicem habeant Hieronymum, qui puellis septem annos natis, biblia in vulgari lingua tradit. Rationem quomodo iuste illi requirunt, qui</i></p> <p><i>[58] verbum Dei rem rationis plenissimam obscuritati & tenebris mandant? Et quomodo illi non omni ratione carent, qui putant rectissimam viam in errores, salutarem lucem in tenebras, veritatem ipsam in mendacia, & panem vitae ad</i></p>	<p>shadows. The Apostolic doctrine more openly commands that everything be transmitted in the most plain language for there to be need to review the matter, save only that men, while they defend shadows, are more blind than the shadows themselves. St. Paul insists to the Corinthians, urges that they understand everything.²¹¹ This one passage should bring shame to the defenders of the Roman religion if they themselves had not (already) dashed to pieces all sense of their own shame.</p> <p>For what does Paul want through these words: ‘to speak unto the air’; ‘what shall I profit you?’; ‘I am as a barbarian’; ‘my mind lacks all fruit’; ‘everything should be for the purpose of building’; ‘how will he who does not understand respond Amen?’; ‘don’t be as little children’; ‘pursuing a foreign language’; ‘foreign lips’; ‘a foreign language is for a watchword for the faithless’; ‘you are mad’; ‘if there is not anyone who can interpret, let him who speaks in languages be silent’; Paul orders and says ‘let him be silent’?²¹² Who from our priests has ever obeyed Paul and fallen silent? Certainly, either Paul ordered this with no authority or our priests with the utmost impudence don’t obey. I should gladly like to know how they respond²¹³ to Paul. But is it really the case that they depart from Paul and follow the old Church? Greeks spoke in Greek, the Latins in Latin, each people has always spoken its own language. For to use a foreign language which is not understood is nothing other than to be brought from human conversation into an inane din and chatter of birds.²¹⁴ But the counsel of the Doctors has a great effect. Let them have Jerome as their judge who transmits the Bible in Vulgate Latin for seven year old little boys.²¹⁵ How can those men justly demand reason when they</p> <p>consign the Word of God – a thing positively brimming with reason – to obscurity and shadows? And how do those who think that men are able to bring the most upright way into errors, beneficial light into shadows, truth itself into falsehood and the bread of life towards</p>
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²¹¹ Paul emphasises the problems of ‘unknown tongues’ in 1 Corinthians 14 *passim*.

²¹² From the *in aerem loqui...taceat* is a list of quotes from Paul’s Epistle to the 1 Corinthians 14. When quoting, Ascham’s Latin lexicon often diverges from that of the Vulgate and Erasmus, for example: Ascham’s *in aerem loqui* seems to be the equivalent of the references in Erasmus and the Vulgate to *loquitur mysteria*; they also use *pueri* where Ascham uses *infantes*; Erasmus uses the adjective *varius*, the Vulgate *alius* and Ascham *alienus* in respect of ‘tongues’.

In some places Ascham is evidently paraphrasing or writing from memory.

²¹³ *respondent* should be *respondeant*, a subjunctive in an indirect question.

²¹⁴ The margin note at this point reads ‘What it is to use a foreign language which is not understood’.

²¹⁵ An explicit rejection of Jerome’s Vulgate Bible here.

mortem, homines adducere posse? Auferant ergo Romani isti Sacrifici modium suum, quem lucernae Dei circumdederunt: & verbum Regni, tot annos iam ab illis in Missa sua, ut Diabolus rapiat seminatum, intelligenti cordi hominum, ut aliqua fruges Domino exoriatur, patria lingua dispergant. Itaque, Romani isti Sacrifici, aut fateantur nomen & verbum Domini inaniter populo ab illis in Missa esse propositum aut Christo respondeant, qui omne verbum non intellectum a Diabolo raptum esse docet. [Missa habet pueriles puppas.] Missa habet & alias suas inanitates, quae omnes puppas pueriles superant. Age, quid cogitas Sacrifice, cum toties te convertas ad Altere, & dicis, Dominus vobiscum, cum saepe nullus adest, saepissime nullus intelligit. An parietibus loqueris? An imaginibus tuis? Audi etiam quod maiori irrisione dignum est: clamat, Ite, Missa

[59] est, cum nemo est qui discedat: si haec non mera stultitia est, quid esse dicis? Tu stas in mensa Domini: quid si solus in mensa tua privata domi sederes, & te huc & illuc iactares, & appellares homines, cum nulli adsunt: & iubeas homines abire priusquam veniant, an-non insanires? An hoc domi ineptissimum est, in Ecclesia Dei decentissimum? Profecto Diabolus nimis se hic prodit, nimia sua stultitia. Nos etiam fatemur has pias sententias esse, Dominus vobiscum: Sursum corda: Ite, Missa est: & cum magno fructu usurpâri posse, si populus Domini ad Communionem collectus, voce & corde respondeat: Et cum spiritu tuo, habemus ad Dominum &c. At quomodo Missa vestra nunc est, nisi has non stultitiae modo sed insaniae notas deposueritis, non solum condemnabitis vos ipsos spreto secundi mandati Dei, sed irrisioni etiam puerorum vos ipsos exponetis, & in illius Solomonis [Ecclesiastes.I] sententia iustam reprehensionem Missa vestra & vos incurretis, Ecce vanitas vanitatum, & omnis vanitas.

death, not lack all reason? Therefore, let those Roman sacrificers remove their shoe²¹⁶ which they have set upon the light of God. And let them spread abroad in native tongue the Word of the kingdom sown for so many years by those men in their own Mass so that the Devil can go on the assault for the understanding heart of men,²¹⁷ so that there may arise fruit for the Lord somewhere. Therefore, either let those Roman sacrificers admit that the name and Word of the Lord have been set forth in the Mass unprofitably for the people by those men, or let them respond to Christ who teaches that every word not understood has been seized by the Devil. The Mass also has other inanities of its own which exceed all childish toys.²¹⁸ Come, what do you think, Sacrificer, when you turn yourself around so many times towards the altar and say ‘the Lord with you’ when often no one is there and very often no one understands. Perhaps you are speaking to walls? Or to your images? Hear something which is worthy of even greater mockery: he shouts ‘Go, it has been sent’

when there is no one who leaves. If this is not pure stupidity, what do you say is? You stand at the table of the Lord; what if you were to sit alone at your own private table at home and fling yourself hither and thither and were to address men when none are present and order²¹⁹ men to go away before they come, would you not be mad? Or is it the case that whilst this is very absurd at home, it is very becoming in the Church of God? Assuredly, the Devil projects himself forth too much here with his own excessive folly. We also admit that these sentiments are pious: ‘Lord with you’, ‘Hearts upwards’, ‘Go, it has been sent’ and can be very fruitfully applied if the people, gathered together for the communion of the Lord, respond with voice and heart ‘And with your spirit, we hold to the Lord etc.’²²⁰ But how, with your Mass as it now is, unless you get rid of these marks not only of stupidity but of madness, will you not only condemn your own selves for spurning the second commandment of God, but also expose yourselves to the derision even of boys, and you and your Mass also incur just censure according to the

²¹⁶ *modium* can mean ‘a measure’ too.

²¹⁷ The ancients considered the heart to be the seat of understanding and wisdom, for example, as per Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1.9.18.

²¹⁸ The margin note reads: ‘The Mass has infantile toys’.

²¹⁹ It is odd that this is present subjunctive (*iubeas*), when all the other verbs are imperfect subjunctive.

²²⁰ The wording of the liturgical preface.

<p>[60] <i>Sabatum sanctifices.</i></p> <p><i>Exteras oras Missae pertransivimus, in ditionem tyrannidis eius nunc ingredimur: occupat enim tyrannidem Missa, omni vera religione Dei aut relegata, aut in carcares & tenebras coniecta, aut in miras angustias & obscuram conditionem demissa. Ait dominus, Sabatum sanctifices. Respondeat mihi hic vir aequus quisquis est, Quomodo sanctificatur Sabatum in Anglia, vel saltem in maxima parte Angliae? Quae sola religio regnat? Cui religioni serviunt tempora, dies, & homines? Ad quid concursus hominum fit? Ad audiendum verbum Dei? Multi raro audiunt, plures non desiderant, plurimi contemnunt, universi cum socordia certe & languore audiunt. At in qua una re singulos dies sine satietate, longissima secula sine fastidio consumimus, & arcem religionis nostrae collocamus? An-non in Missa audienda? an-non in Missa videnda? an-non sola Missa facit ut caetera omnia missa fiant? [Esaiae.58] Est hoc Sabatum delicatum, & sanctum Domini gloriosum? Est hoc facere voluntatem</i></p> <p>[61] <i>Dei in die sancto eius? Age, prospiciamus omnes circum-circa regiones, omnes Ecclesias Angliae. Quid aliud in Sabato habent? Quid aliud requirunt? Quam aliam religionem noverunt? Imo, nullam aliam discere possunt, quia sacerdotum turba, nullam aliam religionem quam Missam docere queunt. Si Missa, si sola Missa non sit ea religio, quam Angli solam expetunt, quare Sacerdotes tolerantur qui nullam aliam religionem quam Missam profiteri possunt. Soli sacerdotes religionem populo offerunt, sed in nulla parte religionis versantur quam in Missa: ergo, nulla alia fere religio quam Missa reliqua est in Anglia. Et hoc non dico ad explicationem rei, quae manifestissima est: sed ad conquestionem calamitatis, quae deploratissima est: in qua re, & brevior & languidior sum, quam tanti sceleris magnitudo postulat: nam peragremus omnes parochias Angliae,</i></p>	<p>saying of that man Solomon: ‘Look, vanity of vanities and all is vanity’.²²¹</p> <p>‘Thou shalt sanctify the Sabbath’.²²²</p> <p>We have passed through the outermost regions of the Mass and we now go into the dominion of its tyranny. For the Mass occupies tyranny when every true religion of God has either been banished, thrown into prisons and shadows, or cast out into incomprehensible narrows and an obscure condition. The Lord says ‘Thou shalt sanctify the Sabbath’. A reasonable man, whoever he is, may respond to me on this point: ‘How is the Sabbath sanctified in England or at least in the greatest part of England?’ What is the form of religion that reigns alone? To which form of religion are the times, days and men subject? For what does a flocking together of men occur? In order to hear the Word of God? Many men rarely hear it; more don’t want to; most reject it; and everyone hears it with indolence certainly and with apathy. But on what one matter do we spend each day without being sated and very long ages without nausea and establish the stronghold of our religion? Is it not in hearing the Mass? Is it not in seeing the Mass? Is it not the Mass alone which brings it about that everything else becomes ‘sent’? Is this Sabbath (not) a delight, the holy of the Lord and glorious?²²³ Is this to do the will</p> <p>of God on his sacred day? Come, let us take a look at all the regions around about, all the churches of England. What else do they keep on the Sabbath? What else do they require? Which other form of religion have they got to know? Indeed, they can learn no other because the crowd of priests are able to teach no other religion than the Mass. If the Mass, if the Mass alone is not to be that religion which English men only strive for, why are priests, who can profess no other form of religion than the Mass, endured?²²⁴ Priests alone offer a religion to the people, but they are engaged in no other aspect of religion than the Mass. And so, almost no other form of religion remains in England than the Mass. And I do not say this by way of an explanation of a matter which is most manifest, but rather as complaint about a disaster which is most deplorable. In this matter I am both briefer and milder than the magnitude of so great a crime demands. For were we to traverse through all the parishes of England, were we to enter the abodes of</p>
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²²¹ Ecclesiastes 1:2.

²²² Exodus 20:8 / Deuteronomy 5:12.

²²³ Isaiah 58:13, worded as per the Vulgate.

²²⁴ No question mark is shown in the Latin.

intremus aedes Magnatum, leguleiorum & etiam episcoporum, an-non omnes pulchre sibi constitutam esse religionem Christi autumant, si indoctum Missatorem sibi comparaverint? An ullum

[62] aliud vestigium Christianae doctrinae docendum curant? Et cum in tanto somno iacet populus, cum tanta ignorantia circumfusi sunt sacerdotes, cum hoc vident episcopi, cum hoc patiuntur magistratus summi, profecto aut nullus Deus est in coelo, aut tanta intollerantia vindicabitur in terra. Et quid est quod tantam ignorantiam, & olim invexit, & tam diu textit in Anglia? Sola Missa: nam dum sola Missa satisfacit omnibus, omnes abiecerunt curam verae religionis. Sabatum Domini non sanctificabatur: vias suas, non voluntatem Domini, omnes fere sequuti sunt. Pauci sic cognoverunt Dominum Deum, ut omnia illi soli tribuerentur: pauci sic cognoverunt hominem, ut omnia illi eximerentur. Verbum & sacrosancta mysteria Dei neglecta sunt. Officia mutuae charitatis incognita sunt. Obedientiae & civilis vitae munera obscurata sunt. Sabatum Domini & vera quies a peccatis, inter paucissimos colebatur: sic ubique loco verae religionis sola Missa dominabatur. At Deus reservavit sibi populum suum, qui non curvavit genua sua coram

[63] Baal. Excitavit etiam his temporibus homines Dei, qui has foeditates Missae repurgarent, & Religionem Christi in veterem suum splendorem restituerunt. Huc Iosias noster intendit, huc nobilis Somersetensis, [Rex Ed. 6. Angliae Iosias] totus cum toto Consilio Regio incumbit, huc nobilissimae Principes Catarina & Elizabetha, clarissimae Duces Somersetensis & Suffolciensis, plurimaeque aliae eximiae nobiles foeminae, plus curae & sedulitatis contulerunt, quam omnes in Anglia Sacrifici, quam multi fere Episcopi, qui in hac re potissimum elaborare debuerunt. Et iam duae sententiae Esaiiae Prophetiae de hac una nostra [Esai. 49.] Anglicana

important men, of lawyers and even of bishops, wouldn't they all confirm that the religion of Christ was excellently appointed for their own selves, if they compared the untutored Mass-maker to him?

Do they see to it that any other trace of Christian doctrine is taught?²²⁵ And when the people lie in such great slumber, when priests are surrounded by such great ignorance, when the bishops see this, when the most senior magistrates allow it, certainly, either there is no God in heaven or such great insolence will be avenged on earth. And what is it which once upon a time introduced such great ignorance and gave it shelter for so long in England? The Mass alone. For while the Mass alone was 'satisfying'²²⁶ everyone, everyone abandoned concern for true religion. The sabbath of the Lord was not being sanctified; almost everyone followed their own ways, not the will of God. Few men got to know the Lord God in such a way that everything was ascribed to him alone; few men got to know man in such a way that everything was removed from him. The Word and the sacrosanct mysteries of God were neglected. The duties of mutual charity became unknown. Gifts of obedience and the civic life were hidden. The Sabbath of the Lord and true respite from sins was cherished among only the fewest. And so, everywhere in the place of true religion, the Mass alone was dominant. But God has preserved for himself his own people who have not bent their knees in the presence of Baal.²²⁷

Even in these times, he has roused men of God to purge this foulness of the Mass and they have restored the religion of Christ to its former splendour. To this end our Josias²²⁸ is inclined, to this end the noble Somerset entirely leans with the whole of the King's counsel, to this end the very noble Princesses²²⁹ Catherine and Elizabeth, the very distinguished leading ladies of Somerset and Suffolk and very many other excellent noble women have contributed more care and zeal than all sacrificers in England, almost than many bishops who especially ought to have exerted themselves in this matter. And now two maxims of the Prophet Isaiah about this one English Church of ours can truly be said,

²²⁵ Note a new sort of formatting on this page – lots of elaborate hyphens at the ends of lines.

²²⁶ A reference to the notion of atonement.

²²⁷ A Christian demon, often interchangeable with Satan. He is also often referred to in the Old Testament as the primary pagan idol of the Phoenicians.

²²⁸ The margin note here reads: 'King Edward VI, Josias of England'.

²²⁹ The *errata* amend *nobilissima princeps* to *nobilissimae principes*.

<p><i>Ecclesia dici vere possunt, nempe, Venerunt structores tui, destruentes te: at consolatur iterum, Et erunt Principes nutritores tui, & Reginae nutrices tuae: quibus ducibus, Sabatum acceptabile in Angliam reducet, summotis his, qui absque Missa foret, tanquam sal insipidum, indigni essent, qui in sterquilinum, ut ait Christus, proiicerentur. Nam da mihi turbam sacerdotum, & summove Missam ad tempus, quid facerent? Docerent? nihil didicerunt. Concionabuntur?</i></p>	<p>namely ‘Your builders are come, those destroying you’, but he gives comfort again with ‘kings will be your nursing fathers and queens your nursing mothers’,²³⁰ with these leaders an acceptable Sabbath will be restored into England (and) once these men have been removed, those who, were it not for the Mass, just like salt that has lost its savour,²³¹ were unworthy to be flung out into a shit-pit, as Christ says.²³² For give to me a crowd of priests and remove the Mass for the time being; what would they do? Would they teach? They have learnt nothing. Will they preach?</p>
<p><i>[64] Imo, vix legere explore possunt. Quid possunt igitur? Solum missâre: sola enim Missa diversorium commune est, quod recipit & alit omnes inutiles sacerdotes: quae sola etiam reiecit & exclusit ab Ecclesia Dei, multos aptos ministros verbi & mysteriorum, qui abominationes Missae non ferentes, in aliud vitae genus, tanquam in aliud domicilium concesserunt. Et sic hii duces caeci perduxerunt populum Dei in has tenebras & noctem, ubi alte dormiunt, & nihil sentiunt, nisi quòd somnio Missae inaniter oblectantur: Punge populum, excita si potes, interroga quomodo servit Deo, adverte etiam tu, quomodo traducit diem festum atque si non audire & videre Missam, eius sit servire Deo, graviter repraehendat. Si interroges de mandatis Dei, de fide in Christum, de officio in proximum, aut tanquam lapis nihil sentit, aut te hereseos nomine, & novae alicuius doctrinae suspectum statim abiget. Nec mirum est: nam cum in festis diebus, animus non docetur, sed oculus tantum pascitur, doctrina Christi nulla, sed semper Missa Missa, non mirum est, inquam, si populus perpe-</i></p>	<p>Assuredly, they are scarcely able to read with certainty. What can they do therefore? Only perform the Mass. For the Mass alone is a public refuge which receives and gives sustenance to all the ineffective priests. It alone has also banished and excluded from the Church of God many able ministers of the Word and mysteries, (men) who not tolerating the abominations of the Mass have withdrawn into another way of life as though into another abode. And in this way, these blind leaders have led the people of God into these shadows and night where they sleep deeply and feel nothing except that they are unprofitably entertained by a dream of the Mass. Trouble the people, rouse them if you can, ask them how they serve God and you also consider how they spend a festal day and, if to serve their God is not to hear and see the Mass, may I be severely rebuked. If you were to ask about the commandments of God, about faith in Christ, about duty unto a neighbour, either he feels nothing, just like a stone, or he will immediately drive you away in the name of heresy²³³ and on suspicion of some new doctrine. Nor is it a wonder, for when on festal days the mind is not instructed, but only the eye gratified, no doctrine of Christ but always the Mass, the Mass, it is no wonder, I say, if the people</p>
<p><i>[65] [E] tuis circumfusus tenebris, e somno ad lucem veritatis aspicere non queat. Arctissimus somnus universos fere complexus est. Populus secure dormit: Sacerdotes stertunt, sed non quietissime: nam iactantur multis inanibus visis: Episcopi</i></p>	<p>continually encompassed by shadows, are not able to look from their sleep towards the light of truth. The deepest sleep has enveloped almost all.²³⁴ The people sleep easy. The priests snore, but not very quietly, for they are troubled by many worthless visions. The</p>

²³⁰ Isaiah 49:17 and 49:23. Ascham’s wording broadly follows the Vulgate.

²³¹ A reference to Matthew 5:13, although Ascham does not follow the wording of the Vulgate or Erasmus which have (respectively): *quod si sal evanuerit ...?* And *quod si sal infatuatus fuerit...?*

²³² Ascham veers from the wording of Matthew 5:13 at the end of this sentence, embellishing with his own strong classical Latin vocabulary. The end of Matthew 5.13 simply says ‘It is thenceforth good for nothyng, but to be cast out, and to be troden downe of men’ (as per the Great Bible).

²³³ Again, the printed version has a Greek omega in the Latin word for ‘heresy’.

²³⁴ Cicero uses *artior somnus* (cf. *arctissimus somnus* here) *sounder sleep* in *De Republica* 6.10.

<p><i>connivent, alii dormiunt, sed turbulentius, excitantur e cubilibus, circumeunt, clamant, negant somnum esse ullum: populum sacerdotes vigilare non dormire vociferantur, somnum in doctrina, somnum in Papismo nullum agnoscunt. Audi concionatorem, qui duplicem somnum [Duplex somnus a quodam concionatore explicatus] in amplissimo loco explicabat, alterum peccati in vita, alterum ignorantiae in doctrina: peccati somnum graviter & erudite pertractavit. Verum in tanta horum temporum caecitate populi, qui verbo Christi non instruuntur: in tanta ignorantia sacerdotum, qui nihil omnino intelligunt: in tanta caligine Papisticae doctrinae, quae in omnes Ecclesiae partes circumfusa est, nullum somnum invenit: sed clam insectatus est eos, qui somnum populi, & somnia sacerdotum notare voluerunt. Et hi concionatores, dum Papam nunque accusant, dum doctrinam</i></p>	<p>Bishops are drowsy; some sleep, but more restlessly; they are roused from their beds; they go around; they shout; they deny that there is any sleeping. The priests cry out that the people are awake and not asleep; they recognise no sleep in doctrine, no sleep in papistry. I have heard of a preacher who tried to explain double²³⁵ sleep in a very extensive passage:²³⁶ one of sin in life, the other of ignorance in doctrine. He handled the sleep of sin seriously and eruditely. But, in such great blindness of these times of a people who are not informed by the Word of God, in such great ignorance of priests who understand nothing at all, in such a great fog of papistical doctrine which has been poured into all parts of the Church, he found no sleep. Privately, he inveighed against those who have been willing to highlight the sleep of the people and the dreams of priests. And these preachers, while they never accuse the Pope, while they</p>
<p><i>[66] Papae nunquam sermone suo exagitant, sed vel silentio commendant, vel conquisito artificio defendunt, nunc pugnantes fulminibus Pighii, nunc ludificantes & φλαυροντες (phlauontes) [i-nugantes blaterantes] scommatibus Thomae Mori, detinent populum in veteri somno suo, ne excitetur voce clamantis Dei: sacerdotes ignorantia sopitos, sinu & amplexu suo foveant: & reliquos, qui populum e somno Papali excitare volunt, quantum possunt deterrent, profecto absque hiis essent: nec Papa, nec Pighius, nec Morus, hoc tempore Angliam somniis suis perturbarent: & magistratus in excitanda religione Christi minus hoc tempore laborarent. Et precor Deum ut somnum ignorantiae in doctrina, mentibus nostris excutiat: ut lucerna verbi Dei praeunte, quid in omni vitae ratione sequendum sit, quivis intelligat: ut dignitas Presbyterii ab hiis contumeliae sordibus, in quibus nunc iacet, repurgata, veterem nitidorem, & antiquum locum suum obtineat. Presbyteris hoc tempore duo [Praesbyteris duo gravissimi constituti adversarii] gravissimi adversarii constituti sunt, Papistae & Missa: [Papistae hostes presbyterorum] Papistae, qui</i></p>	<p>never criticise the doctrine of the Pope in their own speech, but they either entrust it to silence or defend with some carefully-chosen handicraft, now fighting with the thunderbolts of Pighius, now playing the fool, [Greek] now babbling²³⁷ with the scoffings of Thomas More,²³⁸ they hold back the people in their old sleep so that they cannot be aroused by the voice of a God who calls. The priests caress in their bosom and their own embrace those lulled to sleep with ignorance and, as much as they can, deter the rest who want to wake the people from their papal-induced sleep. Indeed, if it had not been for these men, neither the Pope, nor Pighius, nor More would be troubling England at this time with their dreams, and those in charge at this time would be having to work less to awaken the religion of Christ. And I pray that God cast forth from our minds the sleep of ignorance in doctrine; that any one, on the introduction of the light of the Word of God, understands what must be followed in every account of life; that the dignity of the presbytery, having been purged of this filth of abuse in which it now lies, recovers its old lustre and its ancient place. At this time, two very serious opponents of presbyters have been established – Papists and the Mass.²³⁹ Papists, who</p>

²³⁵ The term *duplex*, *-icis* has connotations of deceit.

²³⁶ The margin note reads: ‘Double sleep explained by a certain preacher’.

²³⁷ *phlaurantes*: Ascham possibly got this verb from Isocrates who uses it. The margin note highlights ‘*playing the fool; talking foolishly*’.

²³⁸ Such pejorative references to Pighius and More have already been made on p.15 (above).

²³⁹ The margin note here states: ‘The Papists, enemies of presbyters’.

<p><i>eos in omni genere scelerum volutâri, omnibus</i></p> <p>[67][Eii] <i>ignorantiae tenebris circumfundi maluerint, quam ad Pauli institutionem conformâri illos pati velint. Nam, quis est omnium qui unquàm audivit Papisticum concionatorem, non dico acriter invectum esse, sed vel leviter commotum fuisse hiis tenebris & sordibus, quibus natio quotidianorum sacerdotum foedata iacet: & silentio monstrant quid iudicio probant. Isocrates, disertus & prudens author [Isocrates. in Archidamo.], ostendit tria hominum genera, hostibus quàm Reipub. utiliora esse: primum, qui verbis suis hostium negotia promovent: tum, qui non satis fortiter & animose, sed languidè ac frigidè resistunt: deindè, qui silent & nihil contra dicunt. Et huiusmodi hominum vitio, his temporibus vitia non solùm sacerdotum, sed Romanae religionis maxima momenta sunt, vel magnopere munita, ad defensionem: vel leviter tacta, ad excusationem: vel omninò praeterita, ad cursum liberiolem. Nemo his dictis meis, quasi nimis asperis, stomachabitur, nisi qui se iustè tangi (teste sua conscientia) arbitrabitur. Quanquam non mihi, sed Isocrati: nec illi, sed sibi ipsis hoc tribuant, qui potius desinere malum facere,</i></p> <p>[68] <i>quàm reliqui verum dicere, debeant. Et his quasi custodibus, omnes ferè sacerdotes in somno ignorantiae & multae foeditatis vitae securè iacent: apud quos, si ulla cura dignitatis Presbyterii tuendae excubisset, hoc profectò sacrosanctum Ministerium, in tantam plebis vituperationem, invidiam, & contemptum, his temporibus adductum non fuisset. Alter hostis Presbyterorum Missa est [Missa hostis alter presbyterorum]: nam, quod etiam atque etiam</i></p>	<p>would have preferred that they²⁴⁰ be rolled around in every type of crime,</p> <p>be surrounded by every shadow of ignorance, than be willing to allow those men to be animated to the principles of Paul. For who is there out of everyone who ever heard that a papistical preacher has been, I don't say vehemently assaulted by but, if you will, mildly disturbed by these shadows and filth by which our tribe of 'daily' priests lies befouled. And they demonstrate through their silence what they prove in their judgment. Isocrates, a learned and sagacious writer, shows that there are three types of men more useful to the enemy than to the State:²⁴¹ first, those who advance the business of the enemy with their own words; then, those who resist not bravely and courageously enough, but weakly and feebly; and finally, those who are silent and say nothing against them. And through the crime of men of this sort, in these times, the crimes not only of the priests but of the Roman religion are of the greatest import, either because they have been greatly fortified for their defence, or because they have been barely mentioned with the design of excusing them, or because they have been altogether passed over for a more unimpeded course. No one will be irritated by my words on account that they are overly harsh, unless he considers that he is justly mentioned (with his own conscience as a witness). Albeit they should attribute this not to me but to Isocrates; and not to him (Isocrates) but to themselves who ought to stop wrongdoing</p> <p>rather than speaking the truth.²⁴² And with these men as guards as it were, almost all the priests lie easy in a sleep of ignorance and of immense foulness of life. Among whom, if any concern for protecting the dignity of the presbytery had been exercised, certainly this sacred ministry would not have been led into such great scorn, unpopularity, and contempt of the common people at these times. Another enemy of the presbyters is the Mass. For something which we keep saying over and</p>
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²⁴⁰ viz. the presbyters.

²⁴¹ Isocrates' *Archidamus*, chapters 2-3 which open the work and provide the justification for speaking out: 'The fact is that if any of those who are accustomed to address you had spoken in a manner worthy of the state, I should strictly have held my peace; but now, since I see that they are either seconding the demands of the enemy, or opposing them but feebly, or have kept silent altogether, I have risen to set forth my own views on this subject, feeling that it would be disgraceful if by keeping the place appropriate to my years I should allow the state to pass measures unworthy of itself. Moreover, I think that although on other matters it may be proper for men of my age to keep silent, yet on the question of war it is fitting that they most of all should give counsel who will also have the greatest part in the dangers, especially since the power to judge of what ought to be done is an endowment common to all of us'.

²⁴² The *reliqui* is impossible to translate here and I have omitted it.

dicimus, si Missa non esset, ubi haberent inepti sacrifici diversorium, in quo delitescerent? Ex Missae enim latibulis prosiliunt, & in Missae latebras iterum se condunt tot fucorum examina. Quid ita? Quia nullus est tam iners, tam ab omni literarum doctrina abhorrens, nec tanta scelerum abundantia diffluens sacerdos, quem Missa unquam exclusit. Haec una Missae [Missae officina vilissimos semper aluit opifices] officina vilissimos semper aluit opifices. Reliquae officinae universae, Sutoriae, Fabriles, Textoriae, magnam curam adhibent, ut ineptos non recipiant, ut artis suae dignitatem excolant & ornent: soli sacerdotes rudes & ignarissimi sunt illius artis, cui se tradiderunt. ô caecitatem, non dico sacer-

[69] [Eiii] dotum iam, sed totius Angliae, sed prudentissimorum virorum! Quamobrem? Quia quivis perditus homo, non tunicam, non calceos suos committit nisi artifice: àt Respublica committit animas Christianorum sanguine Christi redemptas cuivis inerti sacerdoti. Quis tam caecus, qui hoc non videt? Quis tam ferreus, qui hoc non deplorat? Et tamen nullus hactenus fuit omnium magistratuum, aut tam sui officii gerens, aut salutis hominum cupiens, aut supplicii Dei pertimescens, qui tantam operam ad hanc rem foeliciter restituendam adhibuit, quantam obscurus quivis artifex in officina sua quotidiana constituenda, indies ponit. Utrum illi non potuerant, aut noluerant hoc facere, nullus est qui non intellegit. Sed haec non tam ad vituperationem praeteritorum, quam ad excitationem bonorum, qui nunc sunt, magistratuum, à me dicuntur. Missa igitur non solum omnem Christianae religionis doctrinam ab ecclesia exclusit, & veluti Monarchiam quandam in loco sancto occupat, sed effecit etiam, ut totum Ministerium corruptum & obscuratum, in nihilum ferè reciderit: quo sit, ut vitam Christo

[70] dignam traducere, & in viis voluntatis eius insistere, hoc est, diem acceptabilem Domino, & Sabatum gloriosum celebrare nullo modo possumus,

over again, if there were not the Mass, where would the inept sacrificers have as their place of refuge²⁴³ in which they could hide away? For so many swarms of drones²⁴⁴ leap forth from their hiding places in the Mass, and into the recesses of the Mass they plunge themselves again. So what? Because there is no priest so ineffective, so averse to all doctrine of the written word, nor abandoned to such a great abundance of crimes, whom the Mass has ever shut out. This one workshop of the Mass has always given sustenance to the most wicked artisans.²⁴⁵ The rest of the world's workshops, cobblers, sculptors and weavers use great care not to admit the unskilled, to cultivate and embellish the dignity of their own trade. Only priests are ignorant and unskilled in that trade to which they have committed themselves. O blindness,²⁴⁶ I don't speak

of priests now, but of the whole of England, of very sagacious men! For what reason? Because any dissolute man you like entrusts neither his clothes nor his shoes to anyone but to a professional. But the State entrusts the souls of Christians, redeemed by the blood of Christ, to any old inept priest. Who is so blind as not to see this? Who is so unyielding as not to deplore this? However, up till this time, there has been not one from all the magistrates, either so responsible in his duty, or so eager for the salvation of men or fearing the punishment of God, who applied as great exertion for the happy restoration of this thing as any unknown artificer puts day in day out into establishing his common workshop. Whether those men have been unable or unwilling to do this, there is no one who does not understand. But these things are said by me not so much by way of censure of what is in the past as a means to stir up the good magistrates that there are today. The Mass therefore, has not only shut out all doctrine of the Christian religion from the Church, and just as if it takes possession of some monarchy in a sacred place, it has even brought it about that the whole ministry, corrupted and obscured, has come to almost naught. By how much it may be the case, as

we are able in no way to lead a life worthy of Christ and to press on in the ways of his will, that is, to celebrate a day acceptable to God and the glorious Sabbath, unless

²⁴³ *diversorium* is a noun often used in a negative sense in Classical authors, for example, in Cicero, *pro Roscio*, 46.134: *officina nequitiae ac deversorium flagitiorum omnium*.

²⁴⁴ Virgil used the same phrase.

²⁴⁵ The margin note reads: 'the workshop of the Mass has always given sustenance to the most wicked artisans'.

²⁴⁶ *caecitas* is a rare Latin word, but used by Cicero.

<p><i>nisi Missae nimis tyrannicum imperium è sede sua demoveatur, & verbum Dei ac mysteriorum eius rectum ministerium in locum suum restituatur.</i></p> <p><i>Honora parentes</i></p> <p><i>Missae non solùm in religionis finibus non constitit, verùm etiam in omnes partes civilis vitae invasit: nec tantùm intulit sese in forensem consuetudinem, sed intrusit se etiam in coniunctionem domesticam: nec vincula solùm arctissimorum officiorum perfregit, sed omnia iura naturae etiam permiscuit. Innumerabiles enim parentes contrà liberos, & liberos contrà parentes, sic dissidiis ac litibus Missa concitavit inter se, & commisit, ut dùm illi in gratiam Missae exhaeredâre liberos, isti contrà de possessione deturbâre parentes contenderint: nullum interim non honoris dico, non pietatis, non officii, sed ne minimum</i></p> <p><i>[71] [Ei] quidèm humanitatis vestigium inter eos apparuerit. Utrum verò hoc à me sit fictum, ad vituperationem Missae: an ex ipsa re natum, ad explicationem veri: Monasteriorum, Canteriarum, & si quid monstri reliquum est, quod haec vestra privata Missa genuit, luce clarius ostendere potest. Praetereà, quoniam hoc praeceptum Domini, omnem obedientiae rationem complectitur, quis herus unquam habuit tam obedientem servum, quae mulier tam amantem maritum, qui parens tam obsequiosum filium, quem non aliquandò privatarum Missarum architecti, ab omni obedientiae iure absoluerunt, & ut se in rasorum gregem abderet, pelexerunt? Foeminae etiam immunes non erant: sed hunc locum urgere non institui, quamvis iustè hoc facere potuerim, & quae sunt huius sermonis magis propria me advocare videntur.</i></p> <p><i>Non occides</i></p> <p><i>Libido omnis tyrannidis singularis semper fuit, in effusione sanguinis praecipue tamen dominatur, ubi</i></p>	<p>the overly tyrannical sway of the Mass can be removed from its throne and the Word of God and the proper administration of his mysteries can be restored to their own place.</p> <p>‘Honour thy Parents’²⁴⁷</p> <p>The Mass not only hasn’t stayed within the bounds of religion, indeed, it has even invaded all parts of civic life. It has not merely presented itself unto public community but also thrust itself into domestic intimacy. Not only has it broken through the chains of the closest offices but has even thrown into confusion all the laws of nature. For the Mass has incited countless parents against children, and children against parents between themselves with disagreements and law suits, and has brought it²⁴⁸ about it that so long as they have striven for the sake of the Mass to disinherit their children, they (in turn) have striven to deprive their parents of their possession.²⁴⁹ Meanwhile, no trace, I say, of honour, filial devotion, duty, not even the smallest</p> <p>trace of humanity has appeared between them. Indeed, whether this has been contrived by me to censure²⁵⁰ the Mass or has been born out of the thing itself to explain the truth, and if anything of the monstrosity of monasteries and chantries²⁵¹ remains which this private Mass of yours has produced, it is possible to demonstrate more clearly than light. Moreover, whereas this commandment of the Lord comprises every reason for obedience, which master ever had such an obedient servant, which wife so loving a husband, which parent so loyal a son, whom the architects of private masses have not at some time absolved from every law of obedience and, so that he would withdraw into the company of shaved men, coaxed him away? Even women were not immune, but I have not resolved to press this aspect although I could have justly done this. Things which are more pertinent to this speech seem to call me away.</p> <p>‘Thou shalt not kill’²⁵²</p> <p>The caprice of all²⁵³ tyranny²⁵⁴ has always been unparalleled, however, in the shedding of blood, it is especially dominant when force is combined with</p>
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²⁴⁷ Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16, though Ascham conflates the reference to father and mother.

²⁴⁸ Cicero also uses the verb *committo* + *ut*. Used in this way it has overtones of being ‘at fault’.

²⁴⁹ Cicero uses the phrase *possessione deturbatus est* in *Epistulae ad Familiares* 12.25.2 and *De Republica* 3.20.30.

²⁵⁰ The *errata* indicate the original *vituperatione* should be correctly *vituperationem*.

²⁵¹ Normally spelled *cantaria* rather than *canteria*.

²⁵² Exodus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 5:17.

²⁵³ Technically *omnis* could be in agreement with *libido* too.

²⁵⁴ ie. the tyranny of the Mass.

<p><i>vis fraude coniungitur. Missae autem maiornè fuerit vis an</i></p> <p>[72] <i>fraus, [Missae maiorne vis an fraus] quaestio est, sed perquam difficilis: intollerantiam Missae in utroque genere attingemus, sed fraudis eius illecebras in proximum locum reservabimus. Vim Missae in effundendo sanguine, & in permiscendo cuncta tempora cruore, quotiescunque ulli extiterint, qui contrà eius insolentiam dicere ausi sunt, vix longa historia, nédum brevis oratio capere potest. Hanc igitur Tyrannidis partem proiectam nimis, & eminentem, & quasi orbis Theatro propositam, relinquemus: de animarum interitu, & quotidiana Christi occisione orationem nostram iustituemus. Interficit se, interficit Christum, qui reus est corporis & sanguinis Christi: [1.Corinthians.11.] Reus est sanguinis Christi, qui manducat panem & bibit calicem Domini indignè, inquit Paulus: manducat & bibit indignè, qui alitè celebrat mysterium, quàm a Christo institutum est, inquit Ambrosius [Ambrosius]: sacerdotes non solùm alitè celebrant, sed perversè hoc factum suum defendunt, quod probat quotidianus usus. Quid concludam? nimis grave dictu est: Quid, accusabo Paulum & Ambrosium qui sic colligunt? Authoritatem eorum vereor.</i></p> <p>[73] <i>[E.v.] An excusabo sacerdotes, & dicam quòd ab institutione Christi non deflectunt? res apertior est, quàm ut negàri possit: insolentia maior, quàm ut defendi queat. Ignorantiae praesidium nullum habent: nam doctissimi hoc faciunt, aetas excusationem non adfert: nam senes hoc comprobant, voluntas & mens tota perversa est: quia levissimum esse putant, ab instituto Christi longissimè discrepère. Quamobrem, aut refutent Paulum & Ambrosium, qui sic colligunt: aut se ipsi condemnent, qui sic faciunt: & alios non accusent, qui verum dicunt: nec acerbitem nostri sermonis, sed improbitatem eorum sceleris reprehendant: prudenter enim apud Sophoclem Electra,</i></p>	<p>deception. Moreover, whether the force or the deception of the Mass has been greater</p> <p>is the question, but an exceedingly difficult one (to answer). We will touch upon the insolence of the Mass in respect of each type, but we shall reserve the allurements of its deception for the next part. Whenever any have come forward who have dared to speak out against its arrogance, a long account, still less a short speech, is hardly able to comprehend the force of the Mass in shedding blood and intermingling bloodshed for all time. Accordingly, we will leave this aspect of the Tyranny, too prominent and conspicuous, as if it had been situated in the Theatre of the world. We will begin²⁵⁵ our speech on the ruin of souls and the daily murder of Christ. He kills himself and kills Christ (the one) who is guilty of the body and blood of Christ. He is guilty of the blood of Christ who eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, says Paul.²⁵⁶ He who celebrates the Lord's Supper²⁵⁷ otherwise than as instituted by Christ eats and drinks unworthily, says Ambrose.²⁵⁸ Priests not only celebrate it otherwise but perversely defend this act of theirs which daily usage sets the seal of approval on. What am I to conclude? It is too painful to say.²⁵⁹ What! Will I accuse St. Paul and St. Ambrose who comprehend²⁶⁰ it in this way? I stand in awe of their authority.</p> <p>Or shall I excuse the priests and say that they don't deviate from Christ's instruction? The position is too obvious for it to be able to be denied, their arrogance too great to be defended. They have no defence in ignorance for highly learned men do this; age does not provide an excuse for the old men approve of this; their inclination and judgement is totally wrong because they think it of the least importance to be at complete odds with the instruction of Christ. Therefore, let them either disprove Paul and Ambrose who comprehend it in this way, or let the very men who act in this way condemn themselves. And let them not accuse others who speak the truth. Let them not reprove the severity of our speech but the depravity of their crime. For (it is</p>
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²⁵⁵ In the printed copy this looks like *iustituemus*, but it must be *instituemus*.

²⁵⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:27. Erasmus's version reads: *quisque ederit panem hunc aut biberit de poculo indigne, reus erit corporis et sanguinis domini*; the Vulgate: *quisque manducaverit panem hunc et biberit calicem domini indigne, reus erit corporis et sanguinis domini*. Ascham is closer in formulation to the Vulgate.

²⁵⁷ Literally, 'mystery'.

²⁵⁸ Ambrose, *Commentarius in epistulam Beati Pauli ad Corinthios primam*.

²⁵⁹ *dictu* = supine in *-u* with *gravis*.

²⁶⁰ This word (*colligunt*) in the sense Ascham uses it here is rare in Classical usage, except in Cicero.

<p><i>Scelerosa facta verba gignunt aspera.</i></p> <p><i>Quid sit, quantum nefas, à Christi institutione discedere utinàm à Divo Cypriano discere voluerint. Cyprianus vehementèr exagitat sua tempora, quia in calice Dominico sanctificando, & plebi ministrando, aquam vino non miscuerint: rem ille gravem facit, contemptum obiicit sermonis</i></p> <p><i>[74] Dei, [Cyprian. Epis. lib.2.3.] iussum Christi non servari clamat, sed populum fraudatum, & erroribus ac mendaciis seductum probat: quia alitèr faciunt quàm Christus antè illos fecit. Si nunc viveret Cyprianus, & nullam communionem in Missa nostra esse cerneret, & integrum poculum plebi ablatum videret, praeter fucatas illas inanitates, quae praefinitas Dei constitutiones sustulerunt, quid diceret? Quid scriberet? Certè non multum referret: nam qui Christum & eius institutionem contemnere ceperunt, Cypriani reprehensionem in quo loco & numero haberent? Quòd verò iactant sacerdotes, se Christum offerre Patri pro redemptione, pro mortuis: praeterquam quòd praeter Dei verbum est, tota illa res plena caedis & cruoris est: nam, licèt Christum interficere non possunt, tamen in hoc sacrificio suo propitiabili propugnando, quod pro remissione peccatorum instituunt, à voluntate interficiendi abesse non possunt: quia Remissio [Hebr.9.] non fit (ut ait Paulus) sine effusione sanguinis. Et quoniam hoc sacrificium, ea unica res est, in qua arcem & tabernaculum sacerdotii sui sacerdotes</i></p> <p><i>[75] nostri ponunt, videamus quibus fundamentis a Deo vel ab homine iactis constet & nitatur.</i></p> <p><i>An Deus author est, in veteri vel novo Testamento? At sacerdotium illud Leviticum, cum omnibus suis sacrificiis, translatus est, nec ubi pedem ponat,</i></p>	<p>written) prudently in Sophocles' Electra: 'Wicked deeds (occur) and bitter words arise'.²⁶¹ Would that they were willing to learn from St. Cyprian what it is, how great a crime (it is), to depart from Christ's instruction. Cyprian vigorously criticises his own times because, in sanctifying the Lord's cup and administering it to the people, they did not mix the water with wine.²⁶² He regards the matter as a serious one; he reproaches contempt of the Word</p> <p>of God; he cries out that the decree of Christ is not preserved, and, in fact, shows a people deceived and led astray with delusions and falsehoods because they do otherwise than as Christ did before them.²⁶³ If Cyprian were alive now and was to observe that there is no communion in our Mass and was to see the untasted²⁶⁴ cup taken away from the people, (and nothing) except those painted worthless objects which have annulled the prescribed regulations of God, what would he say? What would he write? At any rate it would not matter much; for those who have undertaken to despise Christ and his teaching, in what place and in what respect would they have regard for Cyprian's censure for them? Truly, priests make this boast, namely that they offer Christ to the Father for the sake of redemption and for the sake of the dead; except that this is beyond the Word of God and that whole matter is full of slaughter and bloodshed. For even though they are not able to kill Christ, however, in defending this propitiatory sacrifice of theirs which they institute for the remission of sins, they are not able to get away from the desire of killing because (as Paul says) there may come no Remission without the shedding of blood.²⁶⁵ And since this sacrifice is the one point on which our priests base their defence and the tabernacle of their priesthood,</p> <p>let us see upon which foundations –established by God or by man – it rests and relies.</p> <p>Is God then the founder in the Old or the New Testament? But that Levitical priesthood has been transferred with all its sacrifices and does not have</p>
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²⁶¹ Ascham has converted Greek into Latin here. There is no line in the play that corresponds directly to Ascham's quote here; he may be thinking of line 621: αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχρὰ πράγματ' ἐκδιδάσκειται (aischrois gar aischra pragmat' ekdidasketai), 'for reprehensible deeds are learned from reprehensible examples'.

²⁶² Cyprian book 2, epistle 3 or, according to modern numbering, epistle 63 as set out in *Ancient Christian Writers, The Epistles of Cyprian*, eds., J. Quasten, W.J. Burghardt and T.C. Lawler (USA, 1986), vol.3.

²⁶³ Cyprian, book 2, epistle 3 / epistle 63.

²⁶⁴ *integrum* is literally 'unimpaired' or 'whole'.

²⁶⁵ Hebrews 9:22. This statement is applicable to the law of the Old Testament and the actions of Moses. Ascham's Latin broadly follows the wording of the Vulgate and Erasmus, but he has altered the order of the words – in theirs (as with Tyndale and Luther), the 'without' clause comes first.

habet: [Hebr.9] sed quia imperfectum fuit, nec iuxta conscientiam, cultorem sui perfectum reddere potuerat, duravit solum ad tempus idoneum, quod Scriptura vocat Tempus correctionis, ut cederet sacrificio Christi, quod non solum delevit ius peccati & mortis, sed absorbit etiam totum sacerdotium Aaronis. Quamobrem, nostri sacerdotes, hic iuris nihil habent, quanquam tota Quaestionistarum schola Iudaeis sacerdotium suum acceptum refert: sed quod Christus abstulit, restituere illi non possunt. Verum à Melchisedech originem ducunt? At minus impium est, in Levitico sacerdotio consistere: nam si sic faciunt, Diabolum patrem referunt: quid ita? quia exaltant solum suum supra astra Dei, & sedere conantur in monte Testamenti, & Christum honore aut spoliant aut aequant.

[76][Hebr.7.] Melchisedech solius Christi typum gessit & assimilatus est filio Dei: si sacerdotes Melchisedech sunt, ergo ab aeterno sunt: ergo efficax fuit hoc sacerdotium illorum Adam, Noë, Abraham, & patribus: manent etiam in aeternum, salvos faciunt ad plenum, nunquam moriuntur, nunquam peccant, nihil in illis reprehendi potest, & reliqua quae Paulus tribuit sacerdotio Melchisedech. At opinor, non sunt tam impudentes, ut totum hoc sibi vendicent. Sed quid facturi sunt? Ad Christum veniunt, & orant illum, ut aliquam partem sacerdotii illius ad se transferat. Si ita est, bene est. Sed videamus, ubi hoc dicit Christus? Ubi Christus committit sacerdotium ullum, aut munus sacrificandi ullum, uni Christiano, quod non committit omnibus Christianis? Ministerium certum committit Scriptura certis hominibus: at nullum est sacerdotium, quod non imponit omnibus. Profecto superba natio est, omnium sacerdotum nostrorum. Quare? Ministerium quod Scriptura tribuit, pro nihilo habent: nomen non scripturae sed heresως esse putant. Voca sacerdotem

somewhere to put its foot, but because it was imperfect, and nor had it been able to make the worshipper of it perfect in consequence of conscience,²⁶⁶ it lasted only to the appropriate time which Scripture calls the ‘Time of reformation’,²⁶⁷ with the result that it yielded to the sacrifice of Christ which not only destroyed the law of sin and of death but also absorbed the whole priesthood of Aaron. On which account, our priests here have nothing of the law, although the whole school of questionists ascribes the reception of their priesthood to Jews; but what Christ has removed those men are not able to restore. But do they take their origin from Melchizedech?²⁶⁸ It is less wicked to continue in the Levitical priesthood. For if they act in this way, they count the Devil their Father. How is that? Because they exalt his dominion above the stars of God and try to sit on the mount of the covenant and either deprive Christ of his honour or equal it.²⁶⁹

Melchizedech assumed the prototype of Christ alone and was similar to the son of God.²⁷⁰ If our priests are Melchizedech, therefore they are from eternity and therefore this priesthood of those men was efficacious for Adam, Noah, Abraham and for their fathers. They also remain into eternity, they bring men to perfect salvation, they never die, they never sin, it’s not possible to criticise them in any way, and all the rest which Paul ascribes to the priesthood of Melchizedech.²⁷¹ But I think that they are not so shameless that they lay claim to this whole matter for themselves. But what are they going to do? They come to Christ and beg him to transfer some part of that priesthood to themselves. If that is so, it is fine. But let us see – where does Christ say this? Where does Christ bestow any priesthood, or any function of sacrificing to one Christian which he does not bestow to all Christians? Scripture bestows a certain ministry to certain men, but there is no priesthood which he does not set upon everyone. Without a doubt, the tribe of all our priests is arrogant. Why? The ministry which Scripture bestows they hold as nothing; they consider that is a name not of Scripture but of heresy.

²⁶⁶ See Hebrews 9 *passim*.

²⁶⁷ Hebrews 9:10.

²⁶⁸ The priest-king of Salem who blessed Abraham and was taken as a prototype of Christ’s priesthood (Hebrews 7).

²⁶⁹ A quote from Isaiah 14:13-14 which broadly follows the wording of the Vulgate.

²⁷⁰ Hebrews 7:3.

²⁷¹ Hebrews 7 *passim*.

<p>[77] <i>Ministrum, ut aegrè fert! ut cristas tollit! Quid volunt esse? Sacerdotes: si dicerem fures, verè dicerem: nam quod Scriptura tribuit omnibus, hoc illi, invita Scriptura, sibi solis arripiunt. Nam excutiamus locos Scripturae, explicemus hoc nomen sacrificii, & eliciamus (si possumus) per quam auctoritatem Scripturae, soli sacerdotes nostri occupant possessionem nominis sacrificii: utrùm illis solis, an universis aliis conveniẽre debet. Dominicae caenae administrationem vendicant sibi presbyteri, & iure faciunt, nec nos repugnamus: sunt enim dispensatores sacramentorum [1.Corinth.4.] Dei, & utinam (quod sequitur) essent fideles: nam tũm, & suum officium meliũs facerent, & ius alienum minũs affectarent. Sed quid dicunt sacerdotes? quòd reliqui omnes comedunt, quod illi soli offerunt. Si intelligunt offerunt, quod illi soli adminstrant, distribuunt, & offerunt aliis, faciliẽ concedimus: quo in sensu vetustissimi patres hoc verbo usi sunt, ut Divus Cyprianus [Cyprianus.] in celeberrimo illo sermone, De lapsis, hiis verbis solennibus adimpletis, Calicem Diaconus offerre praesentibus cepit.</i></p>	<p>Call a priest ‘a servant’ - how ill he takes it! How he raises his crest! What do they wish to be? Priests. If I were to say thieves, I should speak truthfully. For this which Scripture bestows to everyone those men snatch away for themselves alone against the will of Scripture. To this end, let us investigate places of Scripture, let us explain this name of ‘sacrifice’ and let us tease out (if possible) through which Scriptural basis our priests alone occupy possession of the name of the sacrifice and whether it ought to apply to them alone or all other people. The presbyters lay claim to the sole management of the Lord’s Supper and do it legally and nor do we resist it. For they are stewards of the sacraments of God and would that (which follows) they were faithful.²⁷² For then they would also carry out their own duty better and would claim another’s right to a lesser degree. But what do the priests say? That all the rest eat what they alone offer. If they mean by ‘offer’ that they alone administer, distribute and offer to others, we concede easily. The oldest Fathers have used the word in this sense, just as St. Cyprian in that most celebrated sermon, ‘On those who have Fallen’,²⁷³ in the fulfilment of the solemn words, (wrote) ‘The Deacon took the cup to offer to those present’.</p>
<p>[78] <i>Et Augustinius quoque in epistola 118. ad Ianuarium, [Augustine. Epistle.118.] non semel sed saepiũs eòdem modo utitur. Sin verò ita sentiunt sacerdotes, quòd sacrificium aliquod offerunt Deo, quod quivis alius homo offerre non potest, omninò pernegamus: hĩc persistamus], Scripturam legamus. Ostende mihi sacerdos quisquis es, ubi illud privatum sacrificium est, praeter facultatem ministrandi aliis, quod tibi soli vendicas? Audiamus verba caenae. Comedentibus illis.] Hĩc nihil habes, hoc commune omnium est. Accipiens Iesus panem.] Iàm tua res agitur. Sed accipere panem non est sacrificare, opinor: nam qui iàm accipit, non dũm obtulit: Et gratias agens.] ευχαριστειν (eucharistein), est pro beneficiis acceptis gratias</i></p>	<p>And Augustine also in his Epistle 118 to Ianuarius uses, not once, but quite often the same formulation.²⁷⁴ But, if indeed the priests think in this way, namely that they offer some sacrifice to God which any other man is not able to offer, we altogether deny it. Let us continue here; let us read Scripture. Priest, whoever you are, show me where that private sacrifice is beyond the role of ministering to others which you lay sole claim to. Let us listen to the words of the Supper.²⁷⁵ ‘While they were at Supper’.²⁷⁶ Here you have no advantage for this is common to everyone. ‘Jesus receiving the bread’. Now this is your business. But I fancy that to receive bread is not the same as to sacrifice. For he who receives has not yet offered it. ‘Giving thanks’. ‘eucharistein’ is to give thanks for benefits received, not</p>

²⁷² 1 Corinthians 4:1- 2. It is interesting to note that both the Vulgate and Erasmus use the wording *dispensatores mysteriorum*. Ascham is more in line with Augustine who refers to *dispensatores sacramentorum* in, for example, *De Opere Monachorum* (chapter 24). Tyndale has ‘secretes’ and Luther has *geheimnisse* (meaning ‘mysteries’).

²⁷³ Cyprian, *De Lapsis*.

²⁷⁴ Augustine Epistle *ad Ianuarium* 118 (or 54 by modern numbering). Augustine does not use quite the same phrase as Cyprian, but he does refer regularly to ‘offering’ in the sacrament.

²⁷⁵ Ascham proceeds to describe the Institution which are set out in three Synoptic Gospels: Matthew 26:26-29; Mark, 14:22-25; and Luke 22:19-20; and in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians 11:23-25. He appears to be drawing on all of them.

²⁷⁶ The square brackets used in the printed version of the Latin denote speech marks.

agere, non nostra oblata pro vivis & mortuis offerre. Sed Marcus habet εὐλογεῖν (eulogein), & hoc est Deum in donis suis laudare, non nostris muneribus eum donare. Verum haec sacrificia sunt: concedo, sed non sacerdotum tantum, sed omnium etiam Christianorum, quod nullus sacerdos audet denegare. Quid sequitur? Fregit & dedit.] Profectò iam locum invenio. Eccè regnum

[79] sacerdotum: hîc iacta sunt fundamenta sacerdotalis sacrificii: hoc Frangere est illorum sacrificare: nam hîc manifestò reliquunt Christum, & divertunt, vel potiùs pervertunt omnia ad suum privatum sacrificium. Conferte Testamentum cum Missali, & Christum sedentem in Caena, cum sacerdote stante in Missa: animadvertite ut suum sacerdotium constituunt, quomodo caenam Dominicam mutilant & delumbant: intellegite quid Christus dicit, & facit: & intellegite quid sacerdos aufert aliis, & sibi rapit. Christus fregit.] Quid sequitur? Dedit.] Heùs sacerdos, cùr non sequeris Christum, & das? Et dixit, Accipite, comedite.] Hîc silent in Missa omnes sacerdotes, nemini dicit, Accipite, comedite.

Est hoc esse fideles dispensatores sacramentorum Dei? Christus ait, Accipite, comedite, bibite ex hoc omnes.] Cùr hîc relinquitis Christum sacerdotes? Cùr mandatum Christi spernitis? Ostendit caussam Matthaeus, Ut vestram [Matthew.5.] traditionem, & vestrum sacrificium statuatis.

[80] Ubì est illa vox toties usurpata in Evangelio? Hoc factum est, ut impleretur scriptura: cùm vos contrà, in Missa vestra, omnia facitis, ut non modò scriptura non impleretur, sed ut tota scriptura contemneretur, & in eius locum humana vanitas sufficeretur. Nam si Accipite, Comedite, Bibite, ex hoc omnes (quae Dei mandata sunt) locum in Anglia haberent, sacrificium vestrum privatum, unà cum sacerdotio vestro externo, tàm diù corruisset. Nemo dat in Missa, & propterea nemo accipit in Missa: & interim omnes ferè (iubente Christo ut omnes bibant) à poculo excluduntur. Mandat Christus, Accipite, Comedite, Bibite: nostri sacerdotes & aliud faciunt, & aliud docent, immo aliud mandant. Et quid de

to offer our sacrifices for the living and the dead. But Mark has ‘to praise’,²⁷⁷ that is, to praise God in his gifts, not to confer on him our own gifts. These are indeed sacrifices, I concede, but not just of the priests but of all Christians, (something which) which no priest dares to deny. What follows? ‘He broke it and gave it’. Indeed I now find the place. Behold

the sovereignty of the priests. Here the foundations of the priestly sacrifice have been laid. This ‘to break’ is their ‘to sacrifice’. For on this point they clearly depart from Christ and turn away from him, or rather, they distort everything with a view to their own private sacrifice. Compare the Testament with the Missale and Christ sitting at the Supper with a priest standing in the Mass. Notice as they constitute their own priesthood how they diminish and enervate²⁷⁸ the Lord’s Supper. Understand what Christ says and does. And understand what a priest takes from others, he seizes for himself. ‘Christ broke’. What follows? ‘He gave’. Hey there priest! Why do you not follow Christ and give? And he said, ‘Receive and eat’.²⁷⁹ On this point, all priests are silent in the Mass; he says to no one, ‘Receive and eat’.

Is this what it is to be faithful dispensers of the sacraments of God? Christ said, ‘Receive, eat and drink from this, one and all’. Why do you priests abandon Christ on this point? Why do you spurn the order of Christ? Matthew gives the reason – ‘So that you can establish your tradition and your sacrifice’.²⁸⁰

Where is that expression which is used so frequently in the Gospel? ‘It has been done that Scripture should be fulfilled’;²⁸¹ when you, on the other hand, in your Mass, do everything so that not only is Scripture not fulfilled but the whole of Scripture is disregarded and human vanity is put in its place. For if ‘Receive, Eat and Drink from this, one and all’ (which are the orders of God) had a place in England, your private sacrifice together with your outward priesthood would have so long since sunk to the ground. No one gives in the Mass and, on that account, no one receives in the Mass. Meanwhile, almost everyone (though Christ orders that everyone drink) is excluded from the drinking cup. Christ commands ‘Receive, Eat and Drink’; our priests both do

²⁷⁷ Mark 14:22.

²⁷⁸ *delumbant* is a very rare (classical) Latin word; Cicero uses it in *De Oratore*, 69.

²⁷⁹ Matthew 26:26.

²⁸⁰ There is no such reference in Matthew 5; the chapter is very prescriptive, but does not develop motives.

²⁸¹ Matthew 26:56.

<p><i>huiusmodi doctoribus loquitur Christus? Audite, Qui soluerit unum ex mandatis istis minimis, & sic docuerit homines, minimus vocabitur in regno coelorum. Quomodo sententiam Christi vitabunt sacerdotes nostri? Quod os habent? Si mandat Christus, quare non sequuntur? Si dicunt, non mandat, impudentia maior est quàm scelus.</i></p>	<p>something else and teach something else and, indeed, order something else. And what does Christ say about teachers of this kind? Heed: ‘He who has violated one of these commandments in the least way and has taught men accordingly will be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven’.²⁸² How will our priests evade the pronouncement of Christ? What effrontery do they have? If Christ orders, why do they not follow? If they say he does not order (this), their impudence is greater than their crime.</p>
<p><i>[81] [F.] Sed fortasse dicent, quòd Christus non loquitur de mandatis in caena. Sit iudex Cyprianus, qui eâdem re, haec ipsa verba habet. Quod si nec minima (inquit Cyprianus) de mandatis Dominicis licet solvere [Cyprian.lib.2 Epis.3.], quanto magis tàm magna, tàm grandia, tam ad ipsum Dominicae passionis & nostrae redemptionis sacramentum pertinentia, fas non est infringere? aut in aliud, quàm quod divinitus institutum sit humana traditione mutâre? Intellige, lector quisquis es, quomodo sacerdotes nostri miscent permiscent omnia mandata Dei, ut hoc suum privatum sacrificium, contrà omne mandatum statuunt. Sed fortassè plus habent in caena quod pro se adferant. Progrediamur. Ait Christus, Hoc facite in mei commemorationem.] At hoc illud est, opinor, quod quaerunt. Ast quid est, Hoc facite?] Paulus ipse rationem explicantem statim addit, dicens: Quotiescunque enim manducaveritis panem hunc, & poculum hoc biberitis, mortem Domini annuntiatis, donec veniat: & sic, Hoc facite in meam commemorationem, non est, Soli vos sacerdotes sacrificate: sed, Vos omnes,</i></p>	<p>But perhaps they will say that Christ doesn’t speak about commandments in the Supper. Let Cyprian be the judge, who, on the same matter, has these very words: ‘That if it’s not (says Cyprian) permissible to violate the least of the Lord’s commandments, how much more is it not right to breach such weighty things, such important things, things so pertinent to the very sacrament of the Lord’s passion and our redemption? Or to change through human tradition into something other than what has been divinely instituted?’²⁸³ Understand, reader whoever you are, how our priests confuse, completely confuse all of God’s commandments, so that they can establish this private sacrifice of theirs contrary to every commandment. But perhaps they have more in the Supper that they produce in their own defence? Let us proceed. Christ says ‘Do this in memory of me’.²⁸⁴ This is the very thing, I think, which they require. But²⁸⁵ what’s this ‘Do this’? Paul himself immediately proffers an account in explanation, saying ‘For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes’.²⁸⁶ And so, ‘Do this in remembrance of me’ is not ‘You priests alone sacrifice’, but ‘You all</p>
<p><i>[82] quicumque estis, qui comeditis & bibitis, mortem Domini annunciate. Itaque aut sacrificium suum ex hoc loco colligere desinant, aut munus sacrificandi omnibus Christianis concedant. Et quid hinc colligunt sacerdotes? Ad illos solos pertinet commemoratio passionis Christi? Absit: profectò foelices sunt sacerdotes, si partem hinc habere possunt, si non nimia ambitione sua universum amittant. Quid aliud est in caena? Mandat non ore</i></p>	<p>whoever you are who eat and drink, announce the death of the Lord’. Therefore, either they should leave off inferring their sacrifice from this place or they should concede the function of sacrificing to all Christians. And why do the priests make such an inference from this? Is the remembrance of Christ’s passion especial to them alone? Far from it! Certainly, the priests are lucky if they are able to have a part here, if they don’t lose it all through their excessive claim. What else is there in</p>

²⁸² Matthew 5:19. Aschams Latin exactly matches the Vulgate and Erasmus here.

²⁸³ Cyprian epistle 63 in *Ancient Christian Writers*, eds., Quasten, Burghardt and Lawler, p.106.

²⁸⁴ Luke 22:19 or 1 Corinthians 11:24.

²⁸⁵ Ast is an older and more poetical form of at.

²⁸⁶ Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:26. Ascham follows Erasmus in refererring to a *poculum* rather than a *calix*, but follows the Vulgate in using the verb *manduco* (Erasmus used *comedo*).

suo Christus, sed spiritu eius Paulus: Cùm convenitis ad comedendum, alius alium expectate.] Singularis, si Diis placet, locus pro privato sacrificio. Miror quid cogitant hîc sacerdotes. Quid respondent Paulo? Quis est omnium sacerdotum nostrae aetatis (de sanctissimis loquor) qui expectavit alium, etiam si multi simul fuerint in eâdem Ecclesia sacerdotes? An-non mavult privatum sacrificium celebrâre in privato altari, oclluis cancellis, quàm expectâre alium, ut caenam communem & Dominicam participet, iussu Pauli? At nè aegrè ferat Paulus, hunc monitionis suae contemptum, sed consoletur se hac cogita-

[83] [Fii] tione: quòd qui Christi apertum mandatum in auferendo poculum violant, non mirum est, si exiguam illius praecepti rationem, in non expectando alium, ducant. Si in caenae Dominicae institutione nihil habent sacerdotes, quo suum sacerdotale sacrificium probent, quò se conferent? In reliquas partes Scripturae? Tantundem opinor invenient. Sed sequemur eos, & nomina sacrificii colligemus, & quibus hominibus attributa sunt, quantum possumus, eliciemus.

Videbimus enim (Deo iuvante,) si hoc sacrificium privatum, si hoc sacerdotium externum, sedem in Scriptura habeat ullam, cuius autoritate nostri sacerdotes in caena Domini separant se ab aliis, nec Ministerii finibus se circumscribunt, sed sacrificandi munus pro vivis, pro mortuis applicandum, sibi ipsis sumunt. Et eò libentiùs ingredior in hanc disputationem, quia nostri sacerdotes omnes faces adhibent, Tragoedias agunt, fremunt. Herdes Rex turbatus est & tota Hierosolyma cum eo, si quis mentionem faciat huius rei, vel hiscere audeat contra

[84] externum illorum sacerdotium. Sciunt enim, quòd si haec arx convulsa esset, [Externum sacerdotium arx regni Papistici] regnum eorum labefactatum facile concideret: nec quicquam aegriùs ferunt quàm ministerii finibus circundari, &

the Supper? Christ does not command in his own words, but Paul does through his spirit: ‘When you congregate to eat, let one man wait for one man and another for another’.²⁸⁷ A remarkable form of proof for a private sacrifice if it pleases the Gods! I wonder what these priests are thinking here. What do they respond to Paul? Who is there of all the priests of our time (and I speak about the most holy) who has waited for another, even if there have been many priests all together in the same Church? Does he not prefer to celebrate a private sacrifice on a private altar, with the gates shut, than to wait for another in order to share in the universal Supper of the Lord on the order of Paul? And lest Paul take this disregard of his advice badly, let him console himself with this thought:

inasmuch as those who violate the clear commandment of Christ in withdrawing the cup, it is not surprising that they have slight regard for that order in not waiting for another. If priests have nothing in the institution of the Lord’s Supper with which they might prove their priestly sacrifice, to where should they turn themselves? Into the remaining parts of Scripture? I think they will encounter as great a problem. But we will follow them and will draw together the authorities for the sacrifice and ascertain to which men they have been attributed, as much as we can.

For we will see (with God helping) if this private sacrifice, if this external priesthood, can have any place in Scripture by the authority of which our priests separate themselves from others in the Lord’s Supper and do not confine themselves to the parameters of their ministry, but assume for their own selves the function of sacrificing for the living, applying it to the dead. And for that reason, I more gladly enter into this disputation, because our priests bring forward all their torches, they perform Tragedies, they rage. King Herod became agitated and the whole of Jerusalem with him if anyone were to make mention of this thing, or was to dare to make a murmur against

their external priesthood. For they know that if this stronghold were stormed, their kingdom, shaky on its foundations, would easily fall.²⁸⁸ And nor do they bear anything more bitterly than to be confined by the bounds of the ministry and for their jurisdiction, which human

²⁸⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:33. Ascham’s Latin is much more in line with Erasmus than the Vulgate here, the former reading *cum convenitis ad comedendum, alius alium expectate* and the latter *cum conventitis ad manducandum, invicem expectate*.

²⁸⁸ The margin note reads: ‘The external priesthood - the stronghold of the papist kingdom’.

ditionem suam, quam humana auxit Gloria, scripturae angustis concludi & terminari: cum tamen nihil augustius & sublimius esse potest, quam gladio verbi Dei, in sancto solio, summis & infimis cum dignitate quadam dominari. Deposito hoc gladio, & in vaginam incluso, deposuerunt etiam veram & germanam suam dignitatem omnes ferè sacerdotes. Et hoc probi sacerdotes intelligunt, & se in veterem dignitatis sedem reponi laborant. Sed hoc studium eorum semper impeditum fuit, eorum opera, qui mundi decus & speciem admirantes, externum sacerdotium potius ab hominibus constitutum, quam Ecclesiae ministerium in Scriptura descriptum, sequi maluerint. Sed ad sacrificii explicationem, undè digressi sumus, revertamur.

Sacrificium in novo Testamento, genere duplex, [Sacrificium duplex genere, nomine multiplex] nomine multiplex existit: Unum est quod soli Christo tribuitur, nec

[85] [Fiii] quenquam hominem participem & socium admittit: hoc fiebat in cruce, pro redemptione humani generis, vis tamen & fructus eius diffudit se in omnia tempora antegressa & postera, ut nulla vita, nulla salus existat, (si in ditionem coeli, terrae, & inferorum penetrare, si in memoriam praeteritorum & futurorum respicere vis,) quae non sit morte & languoribus Christi Iesu Sacrifici nostri comparata: qui infert & intrudit se in societatem huius sacrificii, spoliatur Christum Gloria clarissimi sui beneficii. Alterum sacrificium commune est omnium Christianorum, quod fit & suscipitur ab hominibus, ut gratos se & memores summi illius sacrificii Christi exhibeant: & hoc sacrificium latissimè patet, & pertinet in omne officium Christianae vitae: praecipuè cernitur in laudibus Dei, & gratiarum actione, fundit tamen se in omnes rationes & usum Christianae religionis: iustitiae laudem continet, animi humilis, & de se sentientis timidè, verecundè, & horridè, rationem maximam habet [Psalm.58]. Si quis intelligit super egenum & pauperem, [Esaiah.I.] si colligationes impietatis dissolvit, si simplici & mundo corde

Glory has elevated, to be restrained and limited by the confines of Scripture. This is in spite of the fact that there can be nothing more sacred and exalted than with the sword of the Word of God on a sacrosanct throne with a certain dignity to govern the highest and the lowest. But now that this sword has been set aside and encased in its sheath, almost all the priests have likewise set aside their true and genuine²⁸⁹ dignity. And honest priests understand this and strive for themselves to be restored to their former seat of greatness. But this endeavour of theirs has always been impeded by the activity of those who admiring the glory and show of the world have preferred to follow an external priesthood constituted by man than the ministry of the Church outlined in Scripture. But let us return from where we digressed to an explanation of the sacrifice.

There exists in the New Testament a sacrifice which is two-fold in type and manifold in name. One is that which is attributed to Christ alone and

doesn't admit any man as a participant or partner. This was done on the cross for the redemption of humankind, however, its power and effect have poured themselves into every age before and after with the result that no life, no salvation exists (if you wish to penetrate into the dominion of heaven, the earth and the underworld, and if you wish to reflect on the memory of things past and of the future) which has not been obtained by the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, our sacrificer. Whoever takes and forces himself into a share in this sacrifice deprives Christ of the glory of his most lustrous beneficence. The other sacrifice is common to all Christians which is done and undertaken by men in order to present themselves grateful for and mindful of that ultimate sacrifice of Christ. This sacrifice is very widely accessible and is relevant for every part of Christian life. It is particularly perceived in praises of God and in the act of giving thanks, however, it pours itself into all the ways and use of the Christian religion. It includes praise of righteousness and of a humble mind, and about itself has the greatest concern for feeling timid, modest and inadequate.²⁹⁰ If anyone has understanding beyond²⁹¹ the needy and poor man, if he has dissolved the bonds of

²⁸⁹ *germanus* meaning 'genuine' is a favourite word of Cicero.

²⁹⁰ This is probably a reference to the final verses of Psalm 58 (V/GS)/ 59 (H/P) which acknowledge God's power, mercy and succour.

²⁹¹ The *super* is difficult to construe and I have translated *super* as 'beyond'.

<p>[86] <i>se munit, si didicit malum cogitationis ab oculis, manibus, & pedibus auferre: si benefacere, quaerere iudicium, subvenire oppresso, iudicare pupillo, defendere viduam novit, hoc est, si Christum & Christi vitam, pro Christo & Christi gloria induere studet, tunc cum Divo Paulo sentire potest, quam hiis sacrificiis optime placatur Deus. Et quam gratum hoc sacrificii genus acceptumque Deo sit, non Evangelium solum, non singuli ferè Psalmi, non omnes Prophetæ tantum clarissimè prædicant, sed ipsis etiam Gentibus cognitum fuit: [Isocrates] extat enim in Isocrate suavissimo authore suavissima sententia, quæ non ex Rhetorum officina, sed ex Esaiæ schola sumpta videri potest: verba eius hæc sunt. Hoc sacrificium optimum & summum Dei cultum esse puta, si te ipsum optimum virum iustissimumque præstiteris: certior enim spes est, tales viros quodvis bonum à Deo consequuturos, quam qui crebra sacrificia faciunt, crebrasque mactant victimas. Tertium sacrificium, quod soli sacerdotes sibi vendicant in Missa celebranda, in Scripturis non invenio, nec [Sacrificium Missæ non invenitur in Scripturis] quisquam ante invenit, nec unquam inventurus est. In ministrando fidelitèr aliis, sacrificium Deo faciunt, quod quisque facit etiam</i></p> <p>[87] [Fiiii] <i>in suo vitæ munere: sed cum illi soli comedunt, si tunc dicunt, quod sacrificium faciunt pro vivis & mortuis, magis quam Laicus sacrificium facit pro sacerdotibus cum ille comedit, hoc totum est extra Scripturam, extra exemplum Apostolorum, extra usum & consuetudinem purioris Ecclesiæ, extra etiam omnem rationem Papistici regni: nam lege Rainerum illum qui Pantheologiam scripsit,</i></p>	<p>wickedness, and if he strengthens himself with an honest and upright heart,²⁹²</p> <p>if he has learnt to remove mischief of thought from his eyes, hands and feet, and if he has got to know how to do good, to seek justice, to come to the aid of the downtrodden, to bequeath to an orphan and to defend a widow, that is, if he strives to assume Christ and the life of Christ for the sake of Christ and the glory of Christ, then he is able to perceive, along with St. Paul, how very well God is pleased²⁹³ by these sacrifices.²⁹⁴ And quite how agreeable and welcome to God this kind of sacrifice is neither the Gospel alone, nor almost each single Psalm, nor all the Prophets could proclaim so very clearly, but it was known even to the Gentiles themselves. And a most pleasing maxim is extant in Isocrates, a most pleasing author, which can be regarded as having been taken not from the workshop of teachers of rhetoric but from the school of Isaiah. These are his words: ‘Consider that this is the best sacrifice and the highest form of veneration of God if you show yourself to be a very good man and a most just one; for hope is more assured in respect of the sort of men who intend to follow the good, whatever it be, from God than those who make numerous sacrifices and slay countless victims’.²⁹⁵ A third sacrifice, which priests alone arrogate to themselves in celebrating the Mass, I do not find in the Scriptures; no one has found it before and no one is ever going to find it.²⁹⁶ In faithfully serving others they perform a sacrifice to God which every one does even</p> <p>in his own office in life. But if, when those men alone eat, they then say that they are making a sacrifice for both the living and the dead more than the Layman²⁹⁷ makes a sacrifice for the priests when he eats, this entire business falls outside Scripture, outside the example of the Apostles, outside the use and custom of a purer Church, and even outside every doctrine of the papist</p>
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²⁹² The errata changed the original *corpore* to *corde*. Isaiah 1.16-17. Ascham broadly follows the wording of the Vulgate.

²⁹³ *placatur* should be *placeatur* (if from the verb *placeo* ‘I please’) or *placetur* (if from the verb *placo* ‘I appease’).

²⁹⁴ Ascham clearly has in mind here Epistle to the Philippians 4:18 and/or Hebrews 13:16.

²⁹⁵ Isocrates, *To Nicocles*, 2.20.

²⁹⁶ The margin note reads: ‘The sacrifice of the Mass is not found in the Scriptures’.

²⁹⁷ In ecclesiastical Latin, this term (*Laicus*) denotes someone who is not *clericus* (‘clerical’). It derives from the Greek *laikos* (meaning ‘of the people’) and was first used in a letter from Clement, Bishop of Rome, in the first Century AD (40,1-5, and see footnote below, page 118).

<p>[Rainerus Pantheologiae scriptor] <i>hoc est, qui universam sentinam Papisticae faecis exhaustit, nè unam quidem rationem habet, qua vel externum sacerdotium, vel sacerdotale sacrificium muniat. Et Thomas etiam, relicta Pauli schola, iudaizat: [Thomas Aquinas] reliqui, quasi iam facto iudicio, caecam consuetudinem & Papam (En ecclesiam plurimorum sacerdotum) arbitros sumunt, securé compromissum faciunt. Si quis provocet à Papa & consuetudine, ad iudicium verbi Dei, videte quomodo omnes sacerdotes, si non apertis verbis, tamen, (ut Demosthenis verbis utar) [Demosthenes] και σωμασι, και χρήμασι, και ναυσι, και πᾶσι (kai sōmasi, kai chrēmasi, kai nausi, kai pasi), [1.Et corporibus & pecuniis, & navibus & rebus, omnibus] obstitunt & repugnant. Nam quis est eorum, qui non vehementer perturbaretur, si sacerdotium externum, iudicio verbi dei, aut caderet aut staret? Verum nos quod instituimus,</i></p> <p>[88] <i>omnia nomina novi Testamenti Christi colligamus, quibus sacrificium & sacerdotium appellatur. Praeteribo (vereor) multa, sed illa relinquam sacerdotibus, ut causam suam defendant: diligentèr tamen, quod potero, circumspiciam, si vel minimum verbum expiscari queam, quod hoc sacrificium & sacerdotium defendat. Cogor Graeca Latinis interponere, quod invitatus facio, & rarissime facere soleo: sed hoc iam instituo, non ut me Graecis verbis ostentem, sed ut veritatem luminibus suis ostendam. Et profectò, qui ad hanc causam omnibus praesidiis Graecae linguae destitutus accedit, negotium sanè insolens & ineptum sibi sumit. Itaque, si mihi controversia esset, cum aliquo de hac ipsa re, poscerem mediocriter doctum: nam ἄμουσον (amouson) hanc turbam barbarum plenam penitus reiicio [1. Indoctam, rudem, Musis non</i></p>	<p>kingdom. Just read that man Rainerus who wrote <i>Pantheologia</i>,²⁹⁸ that is, the man who emptied out the entire bilge water of the papistical dregs; he has not even one account with which he might defend either the external priesthood or the priestly sacrifice. Even Thomas, having neglected the school of Paul, judaizes.²⁹⁹ The rest, as if judgment had now been made, take blind custom and the Pope (Behold, a church of very many priests!) as judges and fearlessly make a promise to abide by the arbiters' decision.³⁰⁰ For if anyone were to make an appeal from the Pope and from custom to the judgment of the Word of God, note how all the priests, if not with clear words, however, (to borrow the words of Demosthenes) [<i>Demosthenes</i>] with their bodies, money, ships and everything [<i>I. With bodies, money, ships and everything</i>], obstruct and resist.³⁰¹ For who is there of them who would not be very much unsettled if the external priesthood either fell or stood in the judgment of the Word of God? In truth, as regards that which we</p> <p>have determined upon, let us collect all the records of the New Testament of Christ by which their sacrifice and priesthood are invoked. I will neglect much (I fear), but those things I will leave to the priests to plead their own case. However, I will diligently consider, inasmuch as I am able, if I can search out³⁰² even the smallest expression which supports this sacrifice and priesthood. I am compelled to intersperse Latin with Greek, something I am reluctant to do and am accustomed to do very infrequently. But I do this now, not so that I can show off with Greek words, but so that I can show the truth with their light.³⁰³ And to be sure, the man who engages in this cause destitute of all the assistance that the Greek language can provide, certainly takes upon himself an insolent and ineffective task. Accordingly, if I were involved in a dispute with someone about this very matter, I would, at the very least, demand learning. For I wholly reject this discordant³⁰⁴ mob full of</p>
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²⁹⁸ Rainerus de Pisis *Pantheologia*, *summam totius theologiae veritatis breviter complectens*. A fourteenth century writer whose work went through a number of editions.

²⁹⁹ sc. Thomas Aquinas. Almost certainly a reference to his theology in his *Summa Theologica*.

³⁰⁰ Note that *compromissum* is a word meaning 'a mutual promise to abide by the award of an arbiter' a meaning used, it appears, almost exclusively by Cicero (for example, in *Verrem*, 2.2.27 and 66).

³⁰¹ Demosthenes's *Reply to Philip*, 11.2, in which Demosthenes tries to rally the Athenian resistance against the power of Philip of Macedon. Ascham quotes precisely Demosthenes precisely.

³⁰² *expiscari* is a word used mainly by Cicero, for example, in *Epistulae ad Familiares* 9.19.1 and in *Pisonem* 28. 69.

³⁰³ Notice Ascham's neat use of *ostento* and *ostendo* in the same sentence.

³⁰⁴ I have translated *amouson* as 'discordant', but literally it means 'without the Muses' and hence *Musis non initiam* in the margin note.

initiatam]. *Sacrificium illud quod nostri sacerdotes solis sibi arrogant, & quod illi certis finibus describunt, continetur sub uno horum nominum, aut (opinor) in Scriptura sedem non habet: ἱλασμός (hilasmos), θυσία (thusia), προσφορά (prospora), δῶρα (dōra), λειτουργία (leitourgia), πρεσβυτέριον (presbuterion), διακονία (diakonia), οἰκονομία (oikonomia), ἐπισκοπή (episkopē), πρεσβεύειν (presbeuein), σπενδεσθαι (spendesthai), ἱερατεύειν (hierateuein). Si sacrificium sacerdotale,*

[89] [Fv] *aut sacerdotium sacrificabile, non certam sedem in uno istorum nominum habet, vereor nē dignum sit ut deturbetur ē possessione quam occupāre studet in libro vitae, & cogatur recipere se in ditionem humanae doctrinae, & in oras Iudiciāe nationis, undē totum, quicquid est, profectum est. De his omnibus, separatim dicemus, ubi videbimus triplicem litem sacerdotibus intendi. [Lis triplex sacerdotibus intenditur] Primū Christus ipse, interdicto acturus est ne illi inferatur iniuria: cum quo opinor vel omnibus sacramentis contendere non audent sacerdotes. Tūm Christiani omnes in ius sacerdotes vocabunt, quōd in suas possessiones tām temerē irruunt: urgebunt etiam Iudaei, ut vindicent quod suum est, qui si vehementius instabunt, profectō sacerdotium nostrum praecipuis suis ornamentis & praesidiis denudabunt: sacerdotium enim nostrum cum Levitico, propinqua societate coniungitur, quod faciliē videbit, qui utraque sacerdotia in Pantheologia Raineri collata inter se considerabit, nisi quōd nostrum ceremoniis superat, in qua re author ille vehementer iactat: sed cominūs contendamus. Continet ne ἱλασμός (hilasmos)*

[90] *sacerdotium vestrum? Interdicit hoc Christus; [i.propitiatio] nam soli Christo ἱλασμός (hilasmos) in Scriptura tribuitur: [Ioan.epistle.1.2.] ait enim Ioannes Epistola.1.2 [i.& ipse est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris: nec pro nostris solum sed etiam pro totius mundi peccatis.] καὶ αὐτος ἱλασμός ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον,*

turmoil.³⁰⁵ That sacrifice, which our priests arrogate to themselves alone and which they define within certain limits, comes under one of these headings or (in my opinion) it doesn't have a place in Scripture: 'hilasmos' (a propitiation), 'thusia' (a sacrificial offering), 'prospora' (an offering), 'dōra' (gifts), 'leitourgia' (public service), 'presbuterion' (presbytery), 'diakonia' (ministration), 'oikonomia' (administration), 'episkopē' (supervision), 'presbeuein' (to pay honour), 'spendesthai' (to pour a libation), 'hierateuein' (to be a priest). If neither the priestly sacrifice

nor the sacrificing³⁰⁶ priesthood has a certain place under one of those headings, I fear that it will be fitting for it to be expelled from the occupation which it zealously keeps in the book of life and be compelled to withdraw into the territory of human doctrine and to the shores of the Jewish nation from whence the whole of it, whatever it is, came from. We will speak separately about all of these issues where we will see a three-fold lawsuit brought against the priests. To start with, Christ himself was about to proceed with an injunction to prevent an injustice being brought upon it. And I don't think the priests dare to dispute with him or with all the mysteries. Then Christians will summon all the priests to trial on the grounds that they force their way with such little shame into their possessions. Even the Jews will press hard to lay claim to what is theirs, who, if they press on too energetically, will undoubtedly lay bare our priesthood of its peculiar adornments and defences. For our priesthood is joined in close alliance with Leviticus, something which he who considers each priesthood as they are compared with one another in the *Pantheologia* of Rainerus, will easily see, save only that ours is pre-eminent in its ceremonies, a point which that author loudly boasts of. But let us dispute at close quarters. Does (the term) 'hilasmos' (propitiation) contain

your priesthood? Christ prohibits this. For the propitiation is attributed in Scripture to Christ alone. As John says in his Epistle 1.2, 'And he himself is a "hilasmos" (propitiation) for our sins and not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world'.³⁰⁷ This phrase 'for the whole world' very clearly refutes the wickedness of Thomas who claims

³⁰⁵ The margin note reads: 'unschooled, uncultured and not initiated in the Muses'.

³⁰⁶ *sacrificabilis* -e is not a Classical Latin word; it has clearly been included by Ascham in order to achieve an elegant symmetry.

³⁰⁷ 1 John's Epistle 2:2 and the margin note repeats the point. This Greek corresponds with Erasmus's Greek and this is the case for all Ascham's New Testament Greek quotations.

<p>ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου του κόσμου (<i>kai autos hilasmos estin peri tōn hamartiōn hēmōn, ou peri tōn hēmeterōn de monon alla kai peri holou tou kosmou</i>). <i>Hic locus, περὶ ὅλου του κόσμου, planissimè refutat impietatem Thomae, qui in cruce dicit satisfactum esse pro peccatis originalibus, in Missa verò satisfactum esse pro delictis quotidianis mortalibus. Sed qui non audiunt vocem Domini, ibunt post inventiones suas.</i> [Ioan.epistle.1.4] <i>περὶ Ioannes iterum Cap.4. ait, ἀπεστείλεν τον υἱον αὐτου ἱλασμον, περὶ των ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν</i> (apesteilen ton huion autou hilasmon peri tōn hamartiōn hēmōn) [Misit filium suum ut esset propitiatio pro peccatis nostris.]. <i>Et Paulus ad Roman.</i> [Romans.3] <i>ὃν προσθῆτο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ τῆς πίστεως εν τῷ αὐτου ἁίματι</i> (hon prostheto ho theos hilastērion dia tēs pisteōs, en tō autou haimati) <i>Et Psalmo,</i> [Psalm.129.] <i>ὅτι παρα σοι ἱλασμος ἐστίν</i> (hoti para soi hilasmos estin). <i>Et hanc rem consequuntur semper tres res, solius Christi Iesu propriae, ἔλεος, ἀπολύτρωσις, καὶ ἀφεσις</i> (eleos, apolutrōsis, kai aphasis) [i.misericordia, redemptio, remissio] <i>Itaque, aut conticescant hīc sacerdotes, aut verbum unum proferant, quo hīc ius, aliquod vendicent. θυσία</i> (thusia) <i>nē illud sacrificium,</i> [θυσία (thusia)] [i.hostia victima] <i>quod soli sacerdotes possidēre cupiunt, separatū ab aliis hominibus? Negat Christus, negant omnes Christiani, negant etiam</i></p> <p>[91] <i>Iudaei. Christus, teste Paulo, αὐτος δὲ μᾶν ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν προσενέγκας, θυσίαν εἰς το διηνεκὲς ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ του θεου</i> (autos de mian hyper hamartiōn prosenengkas, thusian eis to diēnekes ekathisen en dexis tou theou) [Hebr.10.][<i>Hic vero una pro peccatis oblata victima in perpetuum sedet ad dexteram Dei.</i>] <i>Negant etiam Christiani omnes, duobus clarissimis testibus Paulo & Petro: Paulo, παρακαλῶ ὑμας, ἀδελφοὶ παραστησαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν</i> (parakalō humas, adelphoi parastēsai ta sōmata humōn thusian zōsan)</p>	<p>that there is satisfaction on the cross for original sins, (while) in the Mass, in truth, there is satisfaction for daily mortal transgressions.³⁰⁸ But those who don't listen to the voice of the Lord (will) go after their own inventions.³⁰⁹ John again says in chapter 4 'He sent his Son as a "hilasmos" (propitiation) for our sins'.³¹⁰ And in Paul to the Romans, 'Whom God hath set forth to be an "hilasmos" (propitiation) through faith in his blood'.³¹¹ And in the Psalm, 'that he is an "hilasmos" (propitiation) for you'.³¹² And always three things peculiar to Jesus Christ alone follow this: mercy, redemption and remission. And so, priests should either fall silent on this point or bring forth one word by which they they lay claim to some right here. Is the Greek 'thusia' (sacrificial offering) that sacrifice which our priests are desirous to have dominion over alone separate from other men? Christ denies this, all Christians deny this, even</p> <p>Christ, with Paul as a witness: 'Himself, having made one "thusia" (sacrificial offering) for sins in perpetuity, sat down at the right hand of God'.³¹³ All Christians also deny it³¹⁴ with two of the most distinguished witnesses, Paul and Peter. In Paul, 'I beseech you, brethren, to present your bodies as a living "thusia" (sacrificial offering)',³¹⁵ and very clearly in his Epistle to the Hebrews, 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such "thusias" (sacrificial offerings), God is well pleased'.³¹⁶ And in Peter, '...a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual "thusias" (sacrificial offerings)...'.³¹⁷</p>
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³⁰⁸ sc. Thomas Aquinas. For this view, see Aquinas, *De venerabili sacramento Eucharistiae* 1.

³⁰⁹ Another reference to Psalm 80:12-13 (V/GS)/81:11-12 (H/P).

³¹⁰ 1 John's Epistle 4:10. The margin note highlights the point.

³¹¹ Romans 3:25.

³¹² Psalm 129:4 (V/GS)/130:4 (H/P).

³¹³ Hebrews 10:12. The margin note reiterates that 'In truth, this man, after one sacrifice has been offered for sins in perpetuity, sits at the right side of God'.

³¹⁴ viz. the sacrifice is separate from other men.

³¹⁵ Romans 12:1.

³¹⁶ Hebrews 13:16.

³¹⁷ 1 Peter 2:5.

<p>[Rom.12.]: <i>planissimè ad Hebr. της δὲ εὐποίας, και κοινωνίας μὴ ἐπιλανθανέσθε, τοιαύταις γὰρ θυσίαις εὐαριζείται ὁ θεός</i> (tēs de eupoiias kai koinōnias mē epilanthanesthe, toiautais gar thusias euarizetai ho theos) [Ad Hebr.13.]: <i>et Petro, ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας</i> (hieratuema hagion anangkai pneumatikas thusias) [1.Pet.2]. <i>Iudaei & Gentes nullum verbum tritius habent quam θυσίαν: latiùs ergo patet haec vox, & in plures res pertinet, quam ut soli privato sacrificio sacerdotum serviat. Imò hoc libentèr discerem ab omnibus sacerdotibus, ubi vel semèl θυσία (thusia) in tota scriptura non perduci, sed vel torqueri possit ad tuendum eorum sacrificium. προσφορά (prosfora) etiam Christi [προσφορά (prosfora)] & omnium Christianorum, nusquam sacerdotis nostri privatum sacrificium [i.oblatio] significat. Christi, ad Ephe. παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσφοράν</i> (paredoken heauton hēmōn prosphoran). [Ephe.5.][i. tradidit seipsum pro nobis oblationem.] <i>Ad Hebr. saepiùs: Gentium cooptatio in Christi religionem προσφορά à Paulo dicitur, ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορά των ἐθνῶν ἐνπροσδεκτος, ἡγιασμενὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ</i> (hina genētai hē prosphora tōn ethnōn euprosdektos hēgiasmenē en pneumatic hagiō. [Rom.15] [i. ut oblatio gentium fiat accepta, sanctificata per spiritum sanctum].</p> <p>[92] <i>Si sacerdotes aliquid ex hoc verbo corradere possunt ad constituendum suum sacrificium, adferant ipsi, ego nihil quidē reperio, nisi fortassis ad Iudaismum deficere vellem, ubi hoc verbum est tritissimum. δῶρον (dōron) [δῶρον] [Munus Donum.] propriam sedem in sacrificio nullam habet, divertit tamen aliquandò hūc, non hīc perpetuò habitat. Et Gentibus potiùs ac Iudaeis, quàm Christo & Christianis cum sacrificio significat, servit: ut de Magis illis, προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα</i> (prosēnengkan auto dōra) [Matth.2.& 5]: & Mathaei. 5. <i>ἔὰν οὖν προσφερῇς το δῶρον σου</i> (ean oun prospherēs to dōron sou) [1.Obtulerunt illi dona.] <i>ad Hebraeos, [Hebr.5.] ἵνα προσφερῇ δῶρα τε, και θυσίας ὑπὲρ</i></p>	<p>The Jews and the Gentiles have no word which is more common than ‘thusia’ (sacrificial offering). Therefore, this word extends more widely and applies to more things than to accommodate only the private sacrifice of the priests. Indeed, I should gladly learn this from all priests where once ‘thusia’ (sacrificial offering) in the whole of Scripture cannot be led, but even twisted to protect their sacrifice. And even ‘prospora’ (offering) of Christ and of all Christians nowhere signifies the private sacrifice of our priest. Of Christ to the Ephesians, ‘He [Christ] has, on behalf of us, given³¹⁸ himself as an “prospora” (offering)’.³¹⁹ And more often to the Hebrews. The admission of the Gentiles into the religion of Christ is described by Paul as a ‘prospora’ (offering): ‘...in order that the “prospora” (offering) of the Gentiles be acceptable, having been made sacred by [lit: in] the Holy Ghost’.³²⁰</p> <p>If priests are able to scrape³²¹ together something from this word in order to constitute their sacrifice, let them make the case themselves; I, for my part, find nothing unless on the off-chance³²² I was wanting to desert to Judaism where this word is very common. ‘Dōron’ (gift) has no proper place in the sacrifice; for all that it sometimes takes itself off to this place, it doesn’t reside here in perpetuity. And it is more useful to Gentiles and Jews than to Christ and Christians when it signifies a sacrifice: as about those Magi, ‘they presented unto him “dōra” (gifts)’.³²³ And in Matthew 5, ‘if therefore you offer your “dōron” (gift)’.³²⁴ And in the Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘in order that he may offer both “dōra” (gifts) and sacrifices for sins’.³²⁵ Therefore, if the priests have</p>
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³¹⁸ This should be παρέδωκεν (paredōken) (as per Erasmus).

³¹⁹ Ephesians 5:2. The margin note reads: ‘He handed himself over as an offering for us’.

³²⁰ Romans 15:16. The margin note reads: ‘i. so that the offering of the people be acceptable, having been made sacred through the sacred spirit’.

³²¹ *corradere* is a verb used by Terence but is very rare.

³²² Again, the use of this word (*fortassis*) in classical Latin is rare but found in Cicero.

³²³ Matthew 2:11. The margin note repeats the citation.

³²⁴ Matthew 5:23.

³²⁵ Hebrews 5:1.

ἀμαρτιῶν (*ina prosferē dōra te, kai thusias huper hamartiōn*). Itaque si sacerdotes hīc aliquid habent, ex Gentibus & Iudaeis totum hoc illis commodatum est. *περὶ λειτουργίας (peri leitourgias) iām dicendum est, in quo verbo [λειτουργία (leitourgia)], magnam spem ponunt sacerdotes [Ministerium.] nostri, sed illorum spes est: nullum verbum spargit se fusiūs, nec coarctārī sanē vult angustiis & obscuritate sacrificii sacerdotalis, quod in scriptura locum nullum habet. Hoc verbum λειτουργία (leitourgia) à Gentibus ad Christianos, & e Repub. in Religionem diminavit: Reipub. verbum est, ut in illo, περὶ εἰρηνης (peri eipēnēs) [περὶ εἰρηνης] Isocratis [Isocrates]: δημοτικώτερος (dēmōtikōteros)*

[93] εἶναι νομίζετε τοὺς τὰ τῆς πόλεως διανεμομένους, τῶν ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας οὐσίας ὑμῖν λειτουργόντων (*einai nomizete tous ta tēs poleōn dianemomenous, tōn ek tēs idias ousias hūmīn leitourgontōn*) 1. Qui ex suo Rempub. administrant. Et λειτουργία (*leitourgia*) sic olim in Repub. propriam sedem habuit, ut qui illud nomen ad religionem transtulerint, Demosthenis [Demosth. πρὸς Λεπτ. (Pros Lept)] *reprehensione non caruerint; contra Leptinem enim ait, ὅτι δ' οὐκ ἐστὶ ταῦτο ἱερῶν ἀτέλειαν ἔχειν καὶ λειτουργίων, ἀλλ' οὗτοι τοῦ των λειτουργίων ὄνομα, ἐπὶ τοῦ των ἱερῶν μεταφέροντες ἐξαπατᾶν ζητοῦσι, Ληπτίνην αὐτὸν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ παρασχομαι μάρτυρα (hoti d' ouk esti hierōn ateleian echein kai leitourgion, all' houtoi to tōn leitourgion onoma epi tōn ierōn metapherontes exapatān zētousi, Lēptinō auton hūmīn ego paraschomai martura)* 1. Quod verò non idem sit rebus sacris & publicis administrationibus immunitatem dari, & quòd hī, qui hoc nomen των λειτουργίων (*tōn leitourgion*) ad res sacras transferunt, reliquos decipere conentur, ipsum Leptinem testem proferre possum. Non sum nescius tamen hoc verbum concessisse in religionem apud vetustissimos Oratores: sed Rhetorum spatia relinquamus, & in scholam Iesu Christi nos &

anything here, this is all supplied to them from Gentiles and the Jews. Concerning 'leitourgia' (service),³²⁶ it must now be said that our priests place great hope in this word, but it is a hope on their part. No word spreads itself more diffusely nor, to be sure, is willing to be constrained by the narrows and obscurity of the priestly sacrifice which has no place in Scripture. This word 'leitourgia' (service) has spread³²⁷ from the Gentiles to Christians and from the State into religion. The word is applied in the State, just as in that *On the Peace* of Isocrates:

'You consider that those who dole out public revenues more democratic than those who perform liturgies at their own expense'.³²⁸ Thus at one time 'leitourgia' (service) had an appropriate place in the State with the result that those who applied that name to religion did not avoid the censure of Demosthenes. He spoke against Leptines as follows: 'Now that to have exemption from religious duties and "leitourgia" (public services) is not the same thing, but indeed that these men seek to deceive you by transferring the name of "leitourgia" (public services) to sacrifices I will provide³²⁹ Leptines himself as a witness for you'.³³⁰ [1. 'That indeed to be given immunity for sacred matters and for public administrative matters is not this same thing and that these men who apply this name of "leitourgia" (public service) to sacred matters try to delude others, I am able to produce Leptines himself as a witness.³³¹] However, I am not ignorant of the fact that this word migrated into religion in the writings of the most ancient Orators. But let us leave behind the spheres of the Orators and let us confine ourselves and the whole of our disputation to the school of Jesus Christ. The term 'leitourgia' (public service) in Scripture adapts itself to almost all persons and things.

³²⁶ R. Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher* (Cambridge, 1991), p.136: Fisher, using Erasmus, argued that the Greek term *leitourgiantes* could be rendered as 'making sacrifice'.

³²⁷ *diminavit* - this is an extremely rare word and is used in Cicero's *pro Caelio* 3.6.

³²⁸ Isocrates, *On the Peace*, chapter 13; the complete Greek clause reads: *kai nomizete dēmōtikōterous einai tous methuontas tōn nēphontōn kai tous noun ouk echontas tōn eu phronountōn kai tous ta tēs poleōs dianemomenous tōn ek tēs idias ousias hūmīn leitourgountōn*. The word *ousias* was omitted in the original and inserted by the *errata* (though the *errata* mistakenly refer to p.63 rather than p.93). The margin note reads: 'Those who administer the State from their own means'.

³²⁹ Παρασχομαι (*paraschomai*) = παρασχησομαι (*paraschēsomai*).

³³⁰ Demosthenes, *Against Leptines*, 20.126.

³³¹ Ascham translates the Greek into Latin here.

<p><i>nostrum disputationem omnem recondamus. λειτουργία (leitourgia) in scriptura accommodat se ad omnes ferē personas & res. Christus redemptor noster λειτουργός (leitourgos) vocatur, ut ad Hebraeos [Ad. Hebr.8.] των ἁγίων (tōn hagiōn)</i></p> <p><i>[94] λειτουργός [i. sanctuarii minister]: refertur etiam ad Angelos, ut in Psalmo, [Psalm.102] λειτουργοὶ αὐτοῦ οἱ ποιοῦντες τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ (leitourgoi autou hoi poiountes to thelēma autou). Et ad Hebraeos, οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσι λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα (ouchi pantes eisi leitourgika pneumata) [Ad. Hebr.1.] Reges etiam & Magistratus hoc nomine appellantur, ut apud Paulum [Ad Rom.13] λειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἰσιν (leitourgoi gar theou eisin). [Ad.Rom.15.] Praedicatores etiam verbi, ut: εἰς τὸ εἶναι με λειτουργὸν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη (eis to einai me leitourgon iēsou Chrisou eis ta ethna) & ad Phi. [Ad.Philip.2] σπενδομαι ἐπὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν (spendomai epi leitourgia tēs pisteōs humōn): in quo sensu, ut omnes docti sentient, capitur locus ille in Actibus [Act.13] λειτουργούντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ κυρίῳ (leitourgountōn de autōn tō kuriō). Praeterea, curāre res ad victum quotidianum necessarias λειτουργεῖν (leitourgein) dicitur, ut apud Paulum [Ad.Rom.15] εἰ γὰρ τοῖς πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινωνήσαν τὰ ἔθνη, οφείλουσι καὶ ἐν τοῖς σαρκικοῖς λειτουργῆσαι αὐτοῖς (ei gar tois pneumatikois autōn ekoinōnēsan ta ethnē, ophēilousi kai en tois sarkikois leitourgēsai autois): quo nomine appellat Paulus Epaphroditum [Ad Phil.2.] λειτουργὸν τῆς χρεῖας μου (leitourgon tēs chreias mou): et collectionem in subsidium pauperum [Ad. Cor.9] Christianorum vocat Paulus λειτουργίαν (leitourgian). Postremò, Iudaeorum sacrifici λειτουργούντες (leitourgountes) dicebantur, ut ad Hebraeos [Ad Hebr.10], πας ἱερεὺς ἔστηκε καθ’ ἡμέραν λειτουργῶν (pas hiereus estēke kath hēmeran leitourgōn). Nunc verò, cūm ad nostros sacerdotes</i></p>	<p>Christ, our redeemer, is called a ‘leitourgos’ (public servant), as in the Epistle to the Hebrews,</p> <p>‘a “leitourgos” (servant) of holy affairs’ (is referred to).³³² It is also reported to the Angels, as in the Psalm: ‘His “leitourgoi” (servants) who are doing his will’.³³³ And in the Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘...are they not all “leitourgika” (serving) spirits..?’³³⁴ Even kings and magistrates are called by this term, as in Paul: ‘For they are God’s “leitourgoi” (servants)’.³³⁵ Even preachers of the word (say) that ‘unto me being the “leitourgos” (servant) of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles’.³³⁶ In the Epistle to the Philippians ‘...I am offered upon the...“leitourgia” (service) of your faith’;³³⁷ as all learned men will perceive, that position is taken in this sense in the Acts: ‘As they were “leitourgountes” (serving) to the Lord’.³³⁸ Moreover, to attend to the necessities of daily life, is said “to leitourgein” (to serve), as in Paul ‘For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also “to leitourgēsai” (serve) unto them in carnal things’.³³⁹ And Paul, with this name, refers to Epaphroditus as “leitourgōn” (serving unto to my need)’.³⁴⁰ And Paul calls a collection in aid of the Christian poor ‘leitourgian’ (public service).³⁴¹ Finally, Jewish sacrificers were said to be ‘leitourgountes’ (those serving) as in the Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘And every priest standeth daily “leitourgōn” (serving)’.³⁴² Now indeed, when I draw near to our priests and consider carefully as to whether this word ‘leitourgein’ (to serve) which has spread itself to</p>
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³³² Hebrews 8:2. The margin note reads: ‘servant of the shrine.’

³³³ Psalm 102:21 (V/GS)/103:21 (H/P).

³³⁴ Hebrews 1:14.

³³⁵ Romans 13:6.

³³⁶ Romans 15:16.

³³⁷ Philippians 2:17.

³³⁸ Acts of the Apostles 13:2.

³³⁹ Romans 15:27.

³⁴⁰ Philippians 2:25.

³⁴¹ 2 Corinthians 9:12.

³⁴² Hebrews 10:11.

<p><i>accedo, & cum diligenter circumspicio, an hoc verbum λειτουργεῖν, quod diffudit se ad omnes</i></p> <p><i>[95] ferè res, aliquam ne minimam partem sui, transfudit etiam ad hoc sacrificium pro vivis & mortuis, planè haereo, nec quicquam dicere habeo. Quamobrem, si sacerdotes nostri alium locum scripturæ, præter ea quæ à me tacta sunt, proferre possunt, aut mea non rectè introducta pròbare queunt, & sine molestia audiam, & sine rubore discam: sin verò non possunt, sed relictis tot manifestis & limpidis scripturæ fontibus, in lacunas humanæ consuetudinis traducere nos velint, planè ostendunt quid volunt, & quam doctrinam mundo tradunt, & quem authorem sequuntur, & quòd verbis scripturam & Christum, re ipsa humanam doctrinam & Papam defendunt, manifestò declarant. Itaque, si Christianis hominibus, hoc sacrificium tantoperè commendat, aut ex Christi actis & commentariis illud proferant, aut cæteris desinant maledicere, qui undè nobis ortum sit ostendere laborant. Verba quæ sequuntur διακονῖα (diakonia), πρεσβυτέριον (presbuterion), οἰκονομία (oikonomia), ἐπισκοπὴ (episcopo), πρεσβεύειν (presbeuein), ὑπερετεῖν (hyperetein), hæc singula officium ad institutionem vitæ, non sacrificium ad remissionem peccati significant. διακονῖα (diakonia) nomem obedientiæ & diligentiae est [διακονῖα (diakonia)], pertinet [Ministerium, publicum munus] verò in omnes ferè personas. Christus</i></p> <p><i>[96] διακονὸς περιτομῆς (diakonos pertomēs) dicitur, [Rom.15] [i. minister Circumcisionis.] & Magistratus διακονοὶ θεοῦ (diakonoι theou) [Rom.13] [i. ministri Dei]: consistit tamen hæc vox potissimùm in prædicatione Evangelii Dei: ut Paulus ad Ephesios, [Eph.3.] διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὗ ἐγενόμην διακονος (dia tou euangeliou hou egenomēn diakonos): & in Actibus, [Actu.6.] ἡμεῖς</i></p>	<p>almost everything has transferred even some least part of itself to this sacrifice for the living and the dead, I simply come to a stand still nor do I have anything to say. Wherefore, if our priests are able to offer another place of Scripture except those which have been touched on by me, or they can prove that my assertions are incorrect, I will listen without vexation and learn without embarrassment. But if indeed they are not able, but with so many of the clear and transparent sources of Scripture abandoned, they wish to lead us into the gaps of human custom, they clearly demonstrate what they want, and manifestly declare which doctrine they hand over to the world, and which author they follow, and that they defend Scripture and Christ with words but human doctrine and the Pope in fact. Therefore, if they recommend this sacrifice so vehemently to Christian men, either let them cite it from the actions and records of Christ, or let them desist from slandering others who strive to show to us its origin. The words which follow, (namely) ‘diakonia’ (ministry), ‘presbuterion’ (council of presbyters), ‘oikonomia’ (the administration of a home or state), ‘episcopē’ (the office of a bishop), ‘presbeuein’ (to be an presbyter of the Church), ‘hyperetein’ (to serve),³⁴³ these individually signify an office for the organisation of life and not a sacrifice for the remission of sins. ‘diakonia’ (ministry) [<i>diakonia</i>] is a name characteristic of obedience and diligence, [<i>the ministry, a public duty</i>] and actually applies to almost all people. Christ</p> <p>is called a ‘diakonos’ (minister) of circumcision³⁴⁴ and magistrates, ‘diakonoι’ (ministers) of God.³⁴⁵ However, this term has endured most of all in the proclamation of the Gospel of God, as Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians: ‘Through the Gospel of God (lit. whom), I have become³⁴⁶ a “diakonos” (minister)’.³⁴⁷ And in the Acts, (it is said): ‘And we will adhere³⁴⁸ firmly to the “diakonos” (ministry) of the Word’.³⁴⁹ In Paul, there are</p>
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³⁴³ In fact, Acham does not develop this term but rather the verb σπενδομαι (spendomai).

³⁴⁴ Romans 15:8.

³⁴⁵ Used twice in Romans 13:4.

³⁴⁶ Other koine Greek versions have ἐγενήθην (egenesthēn), but Ascham follows Erasmus with ἐγενόμην (egenomēn).

³⁴⁷ Ephesians 3:7.

³⁴⁸ Erasmus and other koine Greek versions have προσκατερῆσομην (proskarterēsomēn).

³⁴⁹ Acts 6:4.

<p>δε τῇ διακονίᾳ του λόγου προσκαρτερισομένην (<i>hēmeis de tē diakonia tou logou proskarterisomēn</i>). <i>Exempla infinita ferè in Paulo sunt. διακονία (diakonia) etiam pauperum provisio est, ut planissimè patet ad Corinthios [2. Cor.8]. ad foeminas quoque pertinebat, quod Paulus ad Romanos [Rom.16], & Lucas in Actibus [Actu.6] manifestò declarant. Nostram autem nunc in Ecclesia διακονίαν (diakonian), si Paulus revivisceret, opinor non agnosceret: histrionicae scenae, quam Ecclesiae Dei multò aptior est: ità omnes res deflexerunt è recto cursu suo. Verùm ad sacrificium constituendum, vel ipsis sacerdotibus iudicibus, qui hoc totum sibi arrogant, nihil confert διακονία (diakonia). Πρεσβυτερίου (presbyteriou) [πρεσβυτέριον (presbyterion)] nomen dignitatis plenum est: & propterea iniquissimè ab omnibus Episcopis comparatum est, [Ordo presbyterorum. Presbyterium.] quorum culpa, aditus facilis indignissimis semper viris ad tantam dignitatem patuit. Si Presbyteri nostri in Pauli schola se continuissent, quam ipse aperuit in epistolis</i></p> <p>[97] [G] ad Timotheum & Titum, in tantam [1.Tim.4. Titus.1.] vulgi reprehensionem non concidissent: sed, cùm spreta Pauli doctrina, in tabernam sacrificandi sese abdiderint, Missas suas ad nullum doctrinae usum, sed magnum pecuniae quaestum cauponantes, mirum profectò non est, si nomen sordibus tam foedatae officinae dignum, apud plebem commeruerint. Et haec scribo, non ad contemptum presbyterorum, quibus veram laudem & multiplicem honorem restitui exopto: sed ad notandum certum genus hominum, qui presbyteros, in omnibus ignominiae faecibus indignè volutari, quam iusta reprehensione, ut emendentur, culpari maluerint.</p> <p>οἰκονομία (oikonomia) fidelem diligentiam [οἰκονομία (oikonomia)] distribuendi [Dispensatio] multis, non privatam facultatem seorsim sacrificandi pro aliis, significat. Si sacerdotes nostri fideles</p>	<p>almost countless examples. ‘Diakonia’ (ministry) is also³⁵⁰ the provision of the poor, as he very clearly reveals to the Corinthians.³⁵¹ It was also applicable to women, something which Paul plainly declares in his Epistle to the Romans³⁵² and Luke in the Acts.³⁵³ But now, however, if Paul were to come to life again, I don’t think that he would recognise our ‘diakonia’ (ministry) in the Church. It is far more suited to a theatrical scene than the Church of God. And so, all things have deviated from their correct course. Indeed, for the purposes of instituting the sacrifice, even with the priests themselves as judges who claim this whole matter for themselves, the term ‘diakonia’ (ministry) is of no use. The name ‘presbiterion’ (the office of presbyter) is full of dignity; and for that reason, it [the rank of presbyter] has been most improperly instituted by all the bishops through whose fault an easy avenue to so great a distinction lies open to the most unworthy men.³⁵⁴ If our Presbyters had confined themselves to the school of Paul which he himself disclosed in his letters</p> <p>to Timothy³⁵⁵ and Titus,³⁵⁶ they would not have fallen into such great scorn of the people. But since, with the doctrine of Paul spurned, they have hidden themselves away in a booth of sacrificing, trading their own masses to no use of doctrine but for substantial financial gain, it is certainly not surprising if they have earned among the people a name worthy of a workshop so defiled with vileness. And I write such things not so as to incur the contempt of the presbyters, to whom I wish earnestly that true praise and manifold honour is restored, but (I write it) for the purpose of noting a certain type of men who have preferred the presbyters to be unworthily immersed in all the faeces of ignominy than to be censured with a just reprimand in order that they may be corrected.</p> <p>The term ‘oikonomia’ (administration of the household) signifies the faithful care of distributing to many not the private opportunity of making separate</p>
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³⁵⁰ *etiam* must be standing for *etiam*.

³⁵¹ 2 Corinthians 8:2-4.

³⁵² Romans 16:1.

³⁵³ Acts 6.1 refers to widows being neglected in ‘daily ministration’, but the term διακονία (diakonia), strictly speaking, applies to the disciples.

³⁵⁴ The margin note highlights Ascham’s focus on the presbytery here: ‘Order of presbyters. A presbytery’.

³⁵⁵ First Epistle of Paul to Timothy 4:14, Paul writes ‘Despyse not that gyfte that is in the, which was given the thorowe prophecye, wyth the laying on of hands by that auctorite of presthode’ (as per the Great Bible).

³⁵⁶ Epistle of Paul to Titus 1:6, Paul says to Titus that he left him in Crete in order to ordain elders in every city as he had appointed him to do who would monitor the behaviour of citizens in accordance with the following verses.

<p><i>dispensatores sacramentorum, hortatu Pauli, esse voluissent, [1.Cor.4.] non novum seorsim sacrificandi ritum excogitassent: sed alios expectando, communionem caenae in scriptura traditam observassent. Nisi caeci essent sacerdotes nostri, viderent totum privatum sacrificium suum hoc uno verbo tolli, quòd dispensatores</i></p> <p><i>[98] fideles sacramentorum esse debent. Sed quomodo dispensatores sunt, qui nullos expectant, quibus dispensent? Quomodo fideles sunt, qui sibi sumunt, quod aliis dispensare debent? Quid hìc respondebunt sacerdotes ego certè non video: sed libentè audire cupio. Libidinem sacerdotum, in permiscendo omnia, praevidebat Paulus, cum vetat οἰκονομὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνθὰδῃ εἶναι (oikonomon tou theou authadē einai), [Tit.1.] [i. Dispensatorem Dei audacem esse.], quae vox privatam quandam insolentiam notat, quam sacerdotes nostri, in tuendo extrà scripturam sacrificium suum, mirifice prae se ferunt. ἐπισκοπή (episkopē) [ἐπισκοπή (episkopē)] [Visitatio. Episcopatus] non tam nunc honoris, quam olim summae vigilantiae nomen fuit. Veteres Graeci transferebant hoc nomen ad quamvis rem in qua vigiliae & excubiae posita sunt: & propterea, nocturni speculatores, qui castra hostium visunt ab Homero ἐπισκοποὶ (episkopoi) [ἰλιάδ.κ.(iliad)] nominantur. Eâdem ratione Euripides [ἐν Φοῖν. (En Phoin)] [Eurip.], draconem Martis, praesidem Thebanorum fontium, episcopum nominat: quod nomen ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos) si tam diligenter permansisset in veteri sua vigilantia, quàm foelicitèr pervenit ad summam in Repub. dignitatem, profectò nec Missa caenam Domini, nec sacrificium communionem populi, tam furacitèr è domo Dei abstulisset. πρεσβεύειν (presbeuein) [πρεσβεύειν (presbeuein)] [Legationem agere, aetate praeesse.] nomen officii clarissimi</i></p> <p><i>[99] [Gi] existit, quo Paulus nonnunquam utitur, sed solùm ad dignitatem praedicandi Evangelii: ut</i></p>	<p>sacrifices for others. If our priests had wished to be faithful dispensers of the sacraments, as Paul urges them to be,³⁵⁷ they would not have devised a new rite of making separate sacrifices but, in waiting for others, would have observed the communion of the Supper as expounded in Scripture. If our priests weren't blind, they would see that the whole of their private sacrifice is done away with by this one statement:</p> <p>that they ought to be faithful stewards of the sacraments. But how are they stewards who wait for no one to whom they should administer? How are they faithful who take for themselves what they ought to administer to others? What the priests will respond at this point I certainly don't see, but I am gladly willing to listen to them. Paul was foreseeing the licence of priests in their confusion of everything when he forbids 'an oikonomos' (a steward) of God to be wilful;³⁵⁸ and this saying censures a certain private arrogance which our priests, in maintaining their sacrifice outside of Scripture, marvellously exhibit. 'Episcopē' (the office of a bishop) is now a term not so much of honour as it once was of the utmost vigilance.³⁵⁹ The Ancient Greeks used to apply this name to any situation in which watchmen and guards were set in place. Moreover, nocturnal spies who survey the camp of the enemy are classified by Homer as 'episkopoi'.³⁶⁰ For the same reason, Euripides calls the snake of Mars, the guardian of the Theban springs, an 'episkopos'.³⁶¹ If this term 'bishop' (episkopos) had remained as diligently in its former sense of watchfulness as it successfully attained the greatest honour in the Republic, certainly the Mass would not have so stealthily removed the Lord's Supper or the communal sacrifice of the people from the house of God. 'Presbeuein' (to be a presbyter)³⁶² is manifestly the title of a very illustrious office</p> <p>which Paul sometimes uses, but only in relation to the worth of proclaiming the Gospel, as in his Epistle to the</p>
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³⁵⁷ 1 Corinthians 4:2: 'Furthermore it is required of the stewardestes (οἰκονομοῖς) that a man be founde faythful' (as per the Great Bible).

³⁵⁸ Ascham is paraphrasing Paul's Epistle to Titus 1.7. The margin note reads: '(forbids) a steward of God to be presumptuous'.

³⁵⁹ The margin note highlights 'Visitation. Office of a Bishop'.

³⁶⁰ Homer's Iliad 10, lines 38 and 342.

³⁶¹ Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, line 932.

³⁶² The margin note at this point reads: 'To have the office of ambassador, to be pre-eminent through the ages.'

<p><i>ad Ephesios, του εὐαγγελίου ὑπὲρ οὗ πρεσβευῶ ἐν ἁλύσει (tou euangelii huper hou presbeuō en halusei) [Eph.6.]: & iterum ad Corinthios, ὑπὲρ χρίστου ὃν πρεσβεύομεν (huper chrisou oun presbeuomēn) [2.Cor.5.]. Intellige (Lector) qualis fuerit legatus Paulus, & quales nunc sunt legati Papae, & responde bona fide, an non omnia comparata sunt ad pompam externi sacerdotii. σπενδομαι (spendomai) [σπενδομαι (spendomai)] [i. labor, Paciscor] in sacrificiis veram sedem habet, sed hoc apud Graecos à Christo alienos: Paulus abutitur, ad significandum vitae suae exitum, quem appropinquāre indiēs cernebat. & idcirco dicit, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἤδη σπενδομαι, καὶ ὁ κáιρος τῆς ἐμῆς ἀναλύσεως ἐφeseτεκε (ego gar ēdē spendomai kai ho kairos tēs emēs analuseōs ephesteke) 1. [2.Tim.4.] Quasi victima trador in manus sacrificorum, ut corpus meum mactent: & explanatiūs hanc rem tractat ad Philippen [Philip.2.] ubi σπενδομαι (spendomai) capitur pro oblatione corporis sui ad mortem, ut illustretur Evangelium Dei. Nostri sacerdotes non sacrificium esse volunt, cum Paulo: sed sacrifici potiūs, cum Nerone: sacrificantes saepissimē eos, qui lucem veritatis & evangelii propagāre solent: itaque non ex hoc verbo σπενδομαι (spendomai), sacerdotes nostri sacrificium suum statuere volunt, cū non Paulum in sacrificio,</i></p> <p><i>[100] sed persecutores Pauli in sacrificando, ad imitationem sibi proposuerunt.</i></p> <p><i>Reservavi ad hunc locum ea verba scripturae, quae videntur nominatim tueri externum sacerdotium, & sacrificium, & haec sunt, ἱεουργεῖν (hierourgein), ἱερά ἐργάζεσθαι (hiera ergazesthai) ἱερατεύειν (hierateuein), ἱερατεία (hierateia), ἱεροσυνή (hierosunē), ἱερατευμα (hierateuma), ἱερεὺς (hiereus) [ἱεουργεῖν (hierourgein)]. [i. sacra peragere, sacris operati.] Prima vox ἱεουργεῖν (hierourgein), non ad sacrificium, sed praedicationem Evangelii solum modò refertur: & semel utitur</i></p>	<p>Ephesians, ‘...of the Gospel for which I “presbeuō” (I am an ambassador) in bonds’.³⁶³ And again in his Epistle to the Corinthians: ‘And so we “presbeuomen” (we are ambassadors) on behalf of Christ’.³⁶⁴ Understand, (o Reader), the sort of ambassador Paul was and the sort of ambassadors of the Pope there are now, and respond in good faith whether or not everything has been prepared for the parade of the external priesthood. ‘Spendomai’ (I am offered) has a true place in the sacrifices, but this was the case among the Greeks who had no knowledge³⁶⁵ of Christ. Paul makes use of it to mark the end of his life which he used to see approaching every day. And for that reason he says ‘For already “spendomai” (I am being offered) and the time of my departure is at hand (1)’.³⁶⁶ [I am handed over as if a sacrificial victim into the hands of sacrificers so that they might sacrifice³⁶⁷ my body].³⁶⁸ And he deals with this matter more plainly in his Epistle to the Philippians where ‘spendomai’ (I am offered) is taken for a sacrifice of his body for death in order that the Gospel of God may be made manifest.³⁶⁹ Our priests don’t want it to be a sacrifice in the way that Paul meant, but rather are sacrificers in the way of Nero, very often sacrificing those who are accustomed to set forth the light of truth and the Gospel. And so, it is not from this term ‘spendomai’ (I am offered), that our priests wish to establish their own sacrifice since they have set forth for themselves for imitation not Paul in the sacrifice,</p> <p>but the persecutors of Paul in sacrificing.</p> <p>I have reserved for this place those words of Scripture which expressly³⁷⁰ seem to protect the external priesthood and the sacrifice, and these are ‘hierourgein’ (to perform sacred rites), ‘hiera ergazesthai’ (to make offerings), ‘hierateuein’ (to be a priest), ‘hierateia’ (the priesthood), ‘hierōsunē’ (priestly office), ‘hierateuma’ (body of priests), ‘hiereus’ (a priest) [i] to perform sacred rites; having been effected with sacrifices’.³⁷¹ The first thing I said ‘hierourgein’ (to perform sacred rites) is applied not for the sacrifice but only for the proclamation of the Gospel. And Paul uses this word</p>
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³⁶³ Ephesians 6:20.

³⁶⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:20.

³⁶⁵ *alienus* can have connotations of being hostile to someone or something.

³⁶⁶ 2 Timothy 4:6.

³⁶⁷ *mactō* can mean ‘glorify’ as well as ‘sacrifice’.

³⁶⁸ Ascham gives a Latin version of the Greek here.

³⁶⁹ Philippians 2:17: ‘Yee, and thouge I be offered up upon the offerynge & a sacrifice of youre faythe: I reioyce and reioyce wyth you al’ (as per the Great Bible).

³⁷⁰ Literally, *nominatim* means ‘by name’.

³⁷¹ The wording in brackets is the translation of the Latin which has been provided in the text alongside Greek.

<p><i>Paulus hoc verbo, inducens seipsum, [Rom.15.] [Operantem euangelio Dei.] ἱεραρχούντα το εὐαγγέλιον του θεου (hierourgounta to euangelion tou theou). Si nostri sacerdotes sacrosancto munere praedicandi verbi Dei sedulò fungerentur, libentè eos cum Paulo ἱεραρχοῦντας (hierougountas). I. sacrificos appellaremus: & tum omnes hoc nomen, sacrificium, non ad opprobrium, sed ad laudem usurparent: verum nunc, cùm non in verbo Dei sacrifici esse volunt, ad exemplum Pauli: sed in Missa sacrifici dici contendunt, secundum praeceptum Papae, ut patet, cum admittuntur [Rationale Divin.lib.2.de sacerd.] in sacerdotes ab Episcopo: profectò, mirum non est, cum illi officium rectè sacrificandi deserunt, si reliqui nomen sacrifici honesti omittunt. Sint sacrifici, ut debent: & vocentur sacrifici, ut volunt. Paulus Evangelii, Papa Missae sacrificos proponit:</i></p> <p><i>[101][Giii] nostri igitur sacerdotes ostendant, Pauli nè an Papae sacrifici existant. ἱερεὺς (hiereus) [ἱερεὺς (hiereus)] continet in se reliqua verba quae nuper proposuimus, de quo fusiùs nobis disserendum est. Multi boni viri commiserantur depositam hanc & iacentem conditionem Ecclesiae Christi, in quam rara presbyterorum dignitas, rarior ministrorum sedulitas, rarissima dispensatorum fidelitas, sed sola externa sacerdotum vanitas confluit. Quid est quòd sacerdotes dici volunt: ministri, dispensatores, legati, famuli, presbyteri, aut non esse solent, aut non dici currant? Scripturanè Christi, vocat eos sacerdotes, an ministros, & quae sequuntur? ubi vocantur ministri verbi & sacramentorum sacerdotes? Quid fit quod Paulus toties loquens de ministerio, nunquam mentionem facit de sacerdotio? Quid fit quòd Ecclesia vestra contemnit omne fidele ministerium, & recipit solùm, & re & nomine, externum sacerdotium? An Paulus sui oblitus est? An Ecclesia, quae nunc nominatur, temerè hoc facit? Profectò, Paulus divino consilio sacerdotium omittit, & vestra Ecclesia papistico instituto</i></p>	<p>once when he introduces himself as “hierourgounta” (ministering) the Gospel of God’.³⁷² If our priests were to engage industriously in the holy function of proclaiming the Word of God, we would gladly speak of them as ‘hierourgountas’ (ministering), (1) sacrificers, in the way of Paul. And then everyone could employ this term ‘sacrifice’, not as a means to reproach but (rather) to praise; in truth now, since they do not wish to be sacrificers in the Word of God following the example of Paul, but strive to be called ‘sacrificers in the Mass’ in accordance with a decree of the Pope, as is evident when they are admitted into (their role as) priests by a bishop,³⁷³ it is by no means surprising, when those men forsake the duty of sacrificing properly, if the rest forgo the reputation of an honourable sacrificer. Let them be sacrificers as they should be,³⁷⁴ and let them be called ‘sacrificers’ as they wish. Paul believes in sacrificers of the Gospel, and the Pope, sacrificers of the Mass:</p> <p>therefore, let our priests demonstrate whether they are the sacrificers of Paul or the Pope. The term ‘hierus’ (priest) comprises the rest of the words which we recently set forth and we must discuss this more amply. Many good men bewail this condition of the Church of Christ – brought down and lying in neglect - into which the honour of presbyters has rarely flowed, the industry of its ministers still less, and the faithfulness of those ministering very rarely indeed, and only the external vanity of the priests has flowed into it. What is it that the priests want to be called? ‘Ministers’, ‘ministering’, ‘ambassadors’, ‘servants’, ‘presbyters’, either they are not accustomed to be or are not rushing to be called. Does the Scripture of Christ call them ‘priests’ or ‘ministers’ and what follows? Where are the ‘ministers of the word’ also called ‘priests of the sacraments’? How can it be that Paul, who discusses the ministry so many times, never makes any mention of the priesthood? How can it be that your Church entirely disregards every faithful ministry, but accepts instead, in matter and name, only the external priesthood? Was Paul forgetful of himself?³⁷⁵ Does the Church which is now mentioned casually do this? Certainly, Paul omits</p>
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³⁷² Romans 15:16.

³⁷³ The margin makes clear that Ascham is referring here to the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*. This was written by the French bishop William Durand of Mende (1230-1296) and the treatise is ranked with the Bible as one of the most frequently copied and disseminated texts in all of medieval Christianity. It dealt with a vast range of different aspects of worship, including clerical rites of consecration (in book 2).

³⁷⁴ Given Ascham’s argument, this translation seems more appropriate than ‘Let there be sacrificers, as there ought to be’.

³⁷⁵ *an* which introduces this and the following direct question, adds a tone of surprise.

<p>[102] <i>sacerdotium retinet. Tria genera ἱεροσύνης (hierosunēs) [ἱεροσύνης (hierosunēs)] [tria genera in scriptura.] in scriptura describuntur: Leviticum, Iesu Christi, & omnium Christianorum. Leviticum in libris Mosis instituitur, in novo Testamento passim memoratur, ut primo Lucae [Luc.1.], & multis aliis locis. Sublatum totum iam est, teste Paulo, μετατίθεμενης τῆς ἱεροσύνης (metatithemenēs tēs hierosunēs) & c. nam Christi splendor has umbras in nihilum dispulit. Quòd verò nomen sacerdotii, à ministerio Evangelii separaretur, planissimè docet Ezechiel Propheta loquens de sacerdotibus. [Ezech.34.] Cessare faciam ut ultra non pascant gregem meum: & postea, Suscitabo supèr eas pastorem unum, qui pascat eas, servum meum David.&c. Et Oseas etiam Propheta [Ose.4.]: Quia tu scientiam repulisti, repellam te, nè sacerdotio fungaris mihi. Sacerdotes in veteri Testamento persecuti sunt sempèr Prophetas, [Matth.5.] & verbum Dei: sacerdotes in novo Testamento occiderunt Christum, Apostolos, & verbum obscurabant, ut suas traditiones defenderent. An sacerdotes nostrae etiam aetatis, plus quàm caeteri omnes, pugnant contrà aperta mandata Evangelii, nunc non disputo: sed hoc video, odiosum nomen sacerdotii, quod saepissime</i></p> <p>[103][Giiii] <i>repugnabat Evangelio, in ministerio Evangelii nunquam usurpâri. Si falsum dico, proferant unam scripturam ex tot locis Pauli, & me reprehendant: si non possunt, quare ministerium, Pauli verbum, omittunt, & Iudaicum verbum a Paulo in ministerio contemptum introducunt? Quare nomen quod solùm à Paulo praeteritum est, solùm ab illis receptum est? Ministerium contemnunt, quod Paulus tradit: & sacerdotium recipiunt, quod Paulus contemnit. Scio quod omnes Christiani sacerdotes sunt, sed hoc postea, & quid ad hanc rem? nisi ut sacerdotes nostri maiorem suam improbitatem</i></p>	<p>the priesthood from his divine counsel, and your Church, under papist ordinance,</p> <p>retains the priesthood. Three kinds of ‘hierōsunē’ (priesthood) [<i>three types in Scripture</i>] are defined in Scripture: the Levitical, that of Jesus Christ, and that of all Christians. The Levitical is established in the books of Moses and mentioned throughout the New Testament, as in the first chapter of Luke and in many other places.³⁷⁶ But now it is totally destroyed, as witnessed by Paul: ‘the “hierōsunēs” (the priestly office) being changed’ etc.³⁷⁷ for the magnificence of Christ dispersed these shadows into oblivion. Indeed, that the name of the priesthood should be divorced from the ministry of the Gospel the Prophet Ezekiel very clearly teaches when he speaks about priests: ‘I will cause them to cease from feeding my flock anymore’.³⁷⁸ And afterwards, ‘I will set over them one shepherd to nourish them, namely my servant David’ etc.³⁷⁹ And the Prophet Hosea also says: ‘Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I drive³⁸⁰ you away that thou shalt not administer the priesthood for me’.³⁸¹ Priests in the Old Testment are always persecutors of the Prophets and the Word of God.³⁸² Priests in the New Testament killed Christ and the Apostles and began to obscure the Word in order that they might defend their own traditions. I won’t now discuss whether the priests of our time also fight more than all others against the clear commandments of the Gospel. But I see this, that the offensive name of the priesthood which very often</p> <p>was opposing the Gospel is never employed in the ministry of the Gospel. If I utter a falsehood, let them produce one piece of Scripture from so many places in Paul and let them chastise me. If they are not so able, why do they omit ‘the ministry’, the word of Paul, and bring foward a Jewish word from Paul, (a word that is) despised in the ministry? Why is it that the only name which is left out by Paul is the only one taken up by those men? They scorn the ministry which Paul hands down and they take up the priesthood which Paul scorns. I know that all Christians are priests, but after this, what occurs in this regard? (Nothing) except that our priests</p>
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³⁷⁶ For example, the priest Zacharias is mentioned throughout the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel.

³⁷⁷ The quote is from Hebrews 7:12 which refers to a change in the priesthood and the law.

³⁷⁸ Ezekiel 34:10. Ascham follows the Vulgate wording.

³⁷⁹ Ezekiel 34:23. Ascham follows the Vulgate wording.

³⁸⁰ The *errata* changed the original *repellant* to *repellam* in line with the Vulgate.

³⁸¹ Hosea 4:6.

³⁸² Matthew 5:12, though this does not refer directly to priests persecuting the prophets.

<p><i>ostendant: nam & Paulum contemnunt, dùm sacerdotium ministerio adiungunt: & omnes Christianos fraudant, dùm quod omnes sunt, illi soli dici volunt. Itaque, qui sacerdotium restituunt, quod scriptura tollit, & Dei sapientiae suam anteponunt, & Titanum more θεομαχία (theomachian) quandam instituunt. Christi sacerdotium claris verbis ponit epistola ad Hebr. ὁ δε διὰ το μενείν αυτόν εἰς τον αἰῶνα ἀπαράβατόν ἔχει την ἱεροσυνήν (ho de dia to menein auton eis ton aiōna aparabaton echei tēn hierosunēn). Nec sacerdos solum, sed princeps sacerdotum existit Christus. Quorum princeps sacerdotum?</i></p> <p><i>[104] An tantummodo horum qui rasi & victimarii sunt? Absit. Nam tum soli illi acquisiti sunt sanguine Christi, soli essent sancti, soli electi: sacrilegi non sacrifici sunt, si sic sentiunt: quanquam sic eos sentīre docet Magister [Lib.4.sentent. Dist.24.] ille sententiarum: nec hanc doctrinam respuunt illi, sed arrogant sibi, iniuriam facientes Christi sacerdotio, in quo omnia sic perfecta, impleta, & conclusa sunt, ut non solūm vetus omne antegressum sacerdotium cessaret, sed nullum novum in posterūm sacerdotium succederet, praeter illud in Scriptura descriptum, quod lacte (ut Petrus ait) [1.Pet.2.] τῷ λογικῷ (τῷ λογικῷ) enutritum, spirituales non aspectabiles victimas, Deo patri per Christum offerret.</i></p> <p><i>Et hoc illud tertium sacerdotium est, quod posuimus, quod pertinet ad omnes qui Christi sanguine acquisiti sunt: in hoc sacerdotio eccē omnia facta sunt nova, templum, altare, sacrificium, sacerdos: templum non ex lapide polito [Templum.], sed ex carne timore Dei concisa extruitur: altare non splendescit igne [Altare.], sed ardescit amore: sacrificium [Sacrificium.] non visibilis oblatio, sed</i></p>	<p>demonstrate their own greater depravity. For they even condemn Paul while they yoke the priesthood to the ministry, and they defraud all Christians whilst that which everyone is those men alone wish to be called.³⁸³ Therefore, those who restore the priesthood which Scripture removes both set down their own wisdom in place of God's and establish some war with the Gods³⁸⁴ in the custom of the Titans. The Epistle to the Hebrews describes the priesthood of Christ in clear terms: 'But this man because he continueth ever hath an unchangeable "hierōsunēn" (priesthood)'.³⁸⁵ Christ is not only a priest but the chief of the priests. The chief of which priests?</p> <p>Only of these men who have been shaven and are assistants at sacrifices? Let that (idea) go. For then only those men are secured by the blood of Christ, only they would be holy, only they the elect; they are wicked men, not sacrificers, if they think in this way (although that Teacher of Sentences does teach them to think in this way);³⁸⁶ those men do not reject this doctrine, but appropriate it for themselves, bringing injury to the priesthood of Christ in which everything has been perfected, completed and concluded in such a way that not only the entire priesthood of old that preceded came to an end, but also that no new priesthood would come after it in the future except that which is described in Scripture, which (as Peter says), having been nourished by the milk 'of the logos'³⁸⁷, would offer spiritual not visual victims to God the Father through Christ.³⁸⁸</p> <p>And this, that third priesthood, to which we have made reference and which relates to all those who have been secured with the blood of Christ, in this priesthood, behold all the 'new'³⁸⁹ things which have been done - a consecrated shrine, an altar, a sacrifice, the priest. [The shrine] The shrine is not produced from refined stone but from flesh divided up in fear of God. The altar</p>
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³⁸³ viz. priests.

³⁸⁴ Literally, Ascham's Greek word *theomachia* means 'battle of the Gods', an allusion to the great battle in Greek mythology between the new generation of Olympian Gods against the older Titans.

³⁸⁵ Hebrews 7:24.

³⁸⁶ Lombard was commonly known as the *Magister Sententiarum*. Peter Lombard's *Sentences* was the staple of medieval theology. This is a reference to Book 4, distinction 24 of his work, which deals with *de doctrina signorum* (the doctrine of signs). The particular distinction Ascham must have in mind here is: 'On the crown and tonsure: The crown is the sign by which clerics are marked to share in the lot of the divine ministry' (see *Peter Lombard: The Sentences*, trans. G. Silano (Toronto, 2007-2010), book IV, On the Doctrine of Signs).

³⁸⁷ The Great Bible translates this as 'not of the body, but of the soule'. The Greek word connotes something rational.

³⁸⁸ 1 Peter 2:2 and 2:5.

³⁸⁹ This must be meant sarcastically, a response, perhaps, to a charge of innovation. Ascham intends to argue that that the shrine, altar, sacrifice and priest of the Lord's Supper as he describes them are far from 'new', but what was originally intended.

<p><i>spiritualis victima existit: sacerdos [Sacerdos.] non externas ceremonias,</i></p> <p>[105] [G.v.] <i>sed internum cultum, qui propterea λογικός (logikos) a Paulo [Rom.12.] & Petro nominatur, sequitur [1.Pet.2.]: qui hoc sacerdotio fungitur, non amplius perrepat in terra, sed totus evolat in coelum: & licet conclusus sit in [2.Corinth.5.] terrenum gurgustium, deducit tamen in terram coeleste domicilium, in quo vivit non ille, sed Christus in eo: nec vivit tantum, sed regnat etiam, hostibus (Diabolo, peccato, morte, inferno) superatis. Qui subiectus hinc est, & non rex, sacerdos Christi esse non potest: & propterea, scriptura sacerdotum Christi nunquam (nisi fallor) mentionem facit, quin regis aut regni nomen statim subdit. Haec res maxima continet momenta, & eò diligentius haec ipsa notavi loca. Petrus scribit ad Ecclesiam universam Dei, [1. Pet.2] & ait, ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτον βασιλεῖον ἱεράτευμα (humeis de genos eklekton basileion hierateuma). Ioannes in Apocalypsi, de Christo redimente nos per sanguinem suum, [1.5.20. Apocal.] καὶ ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ (kai epoiēsen hēmas basileis kai hierais tō theō mou patri autou) & postea ἐποίησαι ἡμᾶς θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς (epoiēsai hēmas theō hēmōn basileis kai hierais). Et iterum ἀλλ’ ἐσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ καὶ βασιλευσούσι μετ’ αὐτοῦ (all’ esontai heireis tou theou kai tou chrisou kai basileusousi met’ autou). Idem etiam, sed subobscurè, habet Paulus: ubi dicit, εἰ γὰρ (ei gar)</i></p> <p>[106] ὑπομενομεν καὶ συμβασιλευσομεν (hupomenon</p>	<p>doesn’t glow with fire, but burns with love. The sacrifice doesn’t comprise a visible offering but a spiritual victim. The priest doesn’t follow external ceremonies,</p> <p>but an inward way of life, and he is therefore designated as ‘of the logos’ (of the Word³⁹⁰) by Paul³⁹¹ and Peter.³⁹² He who observes this priesthood does not any more creep over the earth, but wholly flies out into heaven. And even if confined to a worldly hovel,³⁹³ nonetheless, he draws down a heavenly dwelling to the earth in which that man doesn’t live, but Christ in him.³⁹⁴ And he doesn’t just live there but also reigns there, and the enemy - the Devil, sin, death and hell - are defeated. The man who is a subject here³⁹⁵ and not a king is not able to be a priest of Christ. Besides, (unless I am deceived,) Scripture never makes mention of the priests of Christ except to the extent that he immediately substitutes the term ‘king’ or ‘kingdom’. This matter comprises points of great importance and, for that reason, I have noted these very places more diligently.³⁹⁶ Peter writes to the universal Church of God and says ‘You are the chosen generation, a “basileion hierateuma” (kingly priesthood)’.³⁹⁷ John in the book of Revelation (writes about) Christ atoning for us through his blood: ‘And hath made us kings and ‘hierarchy’ (priests) unto God and his Father’;³⁹⁸ and afterwards, ‘you have made³⁹⁹ us kings and ‘hierarchy’ (priests) unto our God’,⁴⁰⁰ and again ‘but they shall be ‘hierarchy’ (priests) of God and of Christ and shall reign with him’.⁴⁰¹ And Paul has the same but somewhat obscurely when he says: ‘For if</p> <p>we endure, we shall also reign together’.⁴⁰² For to suffer</p>
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³⁹⁰ As above, this Greek word suggests reason and rationality, but can also connote eloquence.

³⁹¹ Romans 12:1. The Greek refers to *logikēn* (agreeing with *latreian* - service).

³⁹² As per p.104 (above).

³⁹³ *gurgustium* is a rare word, but used by Cicero, for example, in *in Pisonem* 6.13.

³⁹⁴ The opening of chapter 5 of Paul’s second Epistle to the Corinthians draws a distinction between ‘our earthly house’ and the ‘building of God... eternal in the heavens’. Ascham’s use of vocabulary does not tally at all with the Vulgate or Erasmus.

³⁹⁵ ‘Here’ could be referring either to the spiritual life he has just outlined or to ‘this world’; either interpretation works.

³⁹⁶ Presumably Ascham means here that certain applications of kingship and royal power run the risk of being taken out of context.

³⁹⁷ 1 Peter 2:9.

³⁹⁸ Revelation, 1:6.

³⁹⁹ This should read ἐποιήσας (*epoiēsas*).

⁴⁰⁰ Revelation, 5:10.

⁴⁰¹ Revelation, 20:6.

⁴⁰² 2 Timothy 2:12.

kai sumbasileusomen). Pati enim & offerre idem sunt, ut liquet ex epistola ad Hebraeos [Hebr.9.]. Iàm cupio audire quid sacerdotes nostri dicere possunt. Si contendunt se esse sacerdotes externos per scripturam, quare non contendunt se esse reges externos per eandem Scripturam? nam Evangelium nullum habet sacerdotem, quàm eundem habet regem. Si falsum dico, reprehendant per scripturam, & unum locum Evangelii proferant, ubi sacerdotium à regno separatur. Vocare se reges externos non audent: sed profectò eadem ratione, qua sacerdotes externos se vocant, & reges se vocare meritò possunt: & cùm hoc scelus maximum esset, maius tamen committunt, quòd sacerdotes quàm reges nominantur. Nam si reges se esse dicerent, laederent tantum maiestatem terrenam: cùm sacerdotium externum inducunt, Christi Iesu maiestatem violant, qui omne externum sacerdotium moriendo complevit, resurgendo delevit, & ascendendo novum spirituale sacerdotium in coelis & terris instituit. Qui externum sacerdotium revocant, tanquàm Homericì dii, Christum è

[107] coelo detrudunt, mortem eius inanem arguunt, & humanum genus in Iudaismum reducunt. Diabolus gravissimus adversarius constitutus est Christo. Christus liberavit nos a Iudaismi sacrificio: Diabolus nihil antiquius unquàm habuit, quàm reducere hominem in eos laqueos, è quibus expedit eum Christus: & propterea fundavit Papam, hoc est, externum sacerdotem regalem, ubi nomen Iudaici sacrificii propter invidiam praeteritum est, res tota cum accessione cumulatissima reducta est. Nam quis putabit Iudaismum sublatum esse? Quis putabit velum templi scissum esse, qui sacrificium Missae, qui pro peccato populi ceremonias externi nostri sacerdotii cum Iudaismo contulerit? Nos multitudine superamus Iudaeos, & signis & umbris suprà omnem modum abundamus. Iudaei sacerdotes, in tunicis, baltheis, & infulis suis [Iudei sacerdotes in signis & umbris peritissimi.] peritissimi erant: nostri, signa infinita gerunt, quae non intelligunt: & si quicquam

and to offer are one and the same, as is evident from his Epistle to the Hebrews.⁴⁰³ But now I wish to hear what our priests are able to say. If they maintain that they are external priests through Scripture, why therefore do they not maintain that they are external kings through that same Scripture? For the Gospel does not contain any (mention of a) priest but that it deems the same man a king. If I utter a falsehood, let them refute it through Scripture and proffer one part of the Gospel where the priesthood is distinct from a kingdom. They don't dare call themselves external kings but, without a doubt, using that same reason by which they call themselves external priests, they can justifiably call themselves kings. And as huge as this crime would be, they commit a yet greater one by being named⁴⁰⁴ priests rather than as kings. For if they were to say that they were kings, they would only harm their earthly sovereignty; when they introduce their external priesthood, they violate the sovereignty of Jesus Christ who has finished the entire external priesthood through dying, destroyed it through resurrection and through ascension, (and) instituted a new spiritual priesthood in heaven and on earth. Those who call back the external priesthood just like Homeric gods

dislodge Christ from heaven, declare that his death was as nothing, and lead the human race back into Judaism. The Devil has been established as the most serious adversary for Christ. Christ freed us from the Jewish sacrifice. The Devil has never had an older tendency than to lead man back into those snares from which Christ released him.⁴⁰⁵ On that account, he founded the Pope, that is, the royal external priesthood when the name of the Jewish sacrifice had been forgotten on account of its unpopularity, and the whole thing was re-introduced with the most abundant increase. For who will think that Judaism has been removed? Who will think that the curtain of the temple has been torn after he compares with Judaism the sacrifice of the Mass and the ceremonies for the people's sin of our external priesthood? We outdo the Jews in number and (yet) we abound in signs and images beyond all measure. Jewish priests were very skilled in tunics, belts and their ornaments.⁴⁰⁶ Ours have unlimited signs which they

⁴⁰³ Hebrews 9, *passim* and verse 26 in particular.

⁴⁰⁴ *nominantur* also contains a sense of 'being celebrated (as such)'.

⁴⁰⁵ ie the *hominem* (man).

⁴⁰⁶ The margin note here reads: 'Jewish priests most skilled in signs and images'.

<p>[Nostri sacerdotes innumera signa gerunt quae non intelligunt.] <i>intelligunt, nihil tamen sequuntur. Rasura crinium est depositio temporalium, albedo vestium lux verbi Dei, talâres vestes innocentia vitae.</i></p> <p>[108] <i>Vide iàm, cum universi sacerdotes haec signa gerunt, nihil tamen illis est (de plurimis loquor) rapacius, indoctius, faedius. Modò hiis signis, meris fucis & praestigiis, mundo noti esse possunt, quàm noti turpitudine & ignorantia sunt magno labore non curant. Signum doctrinae retinent, doctrinam ipsam reiiciunt: vestiuntur signis, denudantur virtutibus: Christus abstulit signa, ut lumen Evangelii splenderet: illi revocant signa, ut obscuritas Evangelium obrueret. Et profectò, ex quo tempore vox Evangelii conticuit in Ecclesia, mundus veluti surdaster factus, nihil requirebat praeter nuda signa: Papalis strepitus complevit omnes incredibili surditate, & qui surdi sunt, signis & nutibus tantùm comovoentur. ô perversam generationem! ô Diabolicam fraudem! Vitae insolentiam non accuso, proptèr scelera perpetrata: sed Iudaismum illorum noto, propter signa revocata, quorum signorum involucris, inscitia & improbitas sacerdotum teguntur, & eorundem signorum praestigiis, non oculi, sed mentes totius Angliae illuduntur. Velum igitur Templi iterùm expansum</i></p> <p>[109] <i>est, umbris iterùm, imò noctubus omnia circumfunduntur, atque ut levissimè dicam, velum templi frustrà morte Christi scissum est, cùm omnia apud nos sunt iterùm signis & umbris velatissima. Hunc Papae Iudaismum antiqui Patres in spritu viderunt, expressit autem manifestissimè Primasius [Primasius.], suprâ locum Pauli de homine perduto, qui tollit se suprâ Deum, sic inquires: Sacramenta culturae augêre se dicet homo ille: nam, & templum</i></p>	<p>don't understand. And if they do understand anything, they don't follow anything.⁴⁰⁷ A shaving of heads is a means to lay aside temporality, the white colour of clothes, the light of the Word of God, clothes reaching the ankles, the innocence of life.</p> <p>See now, although all priests wear these signs, nothing however is more grasping, more unskilful, more loathsome than them (and I speak about the majority). Only through these signs, excessive deceits and magic are they able to be known in the world; how infamous they are for their vileness and ignorance they don't trouble⁴⁰⁸ themselves about to any great degree. They uphold the trappings of doctrine; they reject doctrine itself. They are clothed in signs; they are laid bare by virtues. Christ removed signs in order that the light of the Gospel would shine forth; those men call back the signs in order that uncertainty should obscure the Gospel. And certainly, from that time, the voice of the Gospel has fallen silent in the Church as though the world, having become hard of hearing, was requiring nothing except mere signs. The papal din filled everyone with an immense deafness and those who are deaf are only stirred by signs and nods. O perverse generation! O deceit of the Devil! I don't blame the arrogance of life on account of crimes that are committed, but I recognise the Judaism of those men on account of the signs that are recalled; it is with the covering of these signs that the ignorance and depravity of priests are hidden, and with the magic of those same signs, not the eyes, but the minds of the whole of England are mocked. I say then that the veil of the temple has again been unfolded,</p> <p>everything is again encompassed by shadows, indeed by nights and, to say the least,⁴⁰⁹ the veil of the temple has in vain been torn by the death of Christ since everything among us is again totally shrouded in signs and shadows. This ancient Fathers, in their inspiration, perceived Judaism of the Pope, but Primasius described it most clearly (commenting) on the passage of Paul about man who is lost, who raises himself up above God, speaking in this way:⁴¹⁰ 'that man will say that he</p>
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⁴⁰⁷ The margin note reads: 'Our priests have endless signs which they don't understand'.

⁴⁰⁸ *curo* can mean to 'heal' or 'cure' and Ascham may have in mind priests' lack of pastoral care.

⁴⁰⁹ *ut levissime dicam* is idiomatic and used in Cicero's *pro Murena* 40.87.

⁴¹⁰ Primasius's *Commentary on Paul's Epistles* compiled from Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine and others, though some consider the attribution to Primasius is spurious: J.A. Robinson (ed.), *Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature* (Cambridge, 1891-1964, 10 vols.), vol.9, p.32. The reference to Paul is to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

Hierosolymis restituet, & omnia legis ceremonialia restaurabit, tantum ut Evangelium Christi dissolvat. Itaque, si Papa sit externus ille sacerdos regalis, qui remoto sole Evangelii, has umbras in Ecclesiam induxit, (quod ipse Papa non negat) quomodo & hii quoque non sunt Papismi satellites, qui se contendunt esse externos sacerdotes? Vellem libenter scire, an alius sit externus sacerdos regius quam Papa: sin verò ille sit, agnoscant sacerdotes omnes externi Papam, dominum & principem suum, cuius & nomen & imperium sequuntur. Si Coloniae essem, hoc mihi omnes concederent: imò, si aliter dicerem, in discrimen vitae

[110] adducerent: nostri in Anglia Colonienses, non audent hoc verbis affirmare, & tamen nullis verbis se possunt à Papismi defensione extricare [Sacerdotes Colonienses.]. Externi sacerdotes Colonsienses Ἀρχιερέα (Archierea) agnoscunt Papam: externi sacerdotes Angli Papam nomine reiiciunt, & Christum Ἀρχιερέα (Archierea) vendicant. Colonienses cum aliqua ratione, Angli sacerdotes contra omnem scripturam hoc faciunt. Colonienses quod sunt, dici volunt, & Papam Ἀρχιερέα (Archierea) agnoscunt, quia successor Petri est, [Rainerus in Panth.] à quo sacerdotium fundatum est: Angli Christum externorum sacerdotum principem constituunt, cum ille spiritualis sacerdotii, quod ad omnes sanguine eius acquisitos pertinet, author extiterit. Rapiunt ad constituendum suum privatum sacerdotium, quod proprium est omnium Christianorum: & quod proprium est omnium, quomodo potest esse privatum aliquorum? Si solos se sacerdotes arrogant, solum Christum ad se pertinere dicunt: si omnes sunt spirituales sacerdotes, iuxta scripturam, cum non se inter omnes numerant, sed à reliquis se separant, & vocant se solos externos sacerdotes, contra omnem scripturam?

strengthens the sacraments of worship, for he will both rebuild the temple of Jerusalem and restore all ceremonial trappings of the law, so much that he destroys the Gospel of Christ'. And so, if the Pope is that external royal priest who, with the sun of the Gospel removed, has brought these shadows into the Church (something the Pope himself does not deny), how is it that these men are not also papist followers who maintain that they are external priests? I would really like to know whether there is an external royal priest other than the Pope; but if he really is the one, let all the external priests acknowledge the Pope, whose name and command they follow, as their master and leader. If I were in Cologne, everyone would allow me this; indeed if I were to say otherwise, they would bring me into risk of my life.

Our men of Cologne in England don't dare to affirm this in words even though they are able with no words to extricate themselves from a defence of papistry. External priests of Cologne acknowledge the Pope as a high priest.⁴¹¹ External English priests reject the Pope in name and appropriate Christ as high priest. Men of Cologne (do this) for a particular reason, but the English priests do this contrary to all Scripture. Men of Cologne wish to be called what they are and they acknowledge the Pope as high priest because he is the successor of Peter by whom the priesthood was founded.⁴¹² The English establish Christ as the head of the external priests since he came forth as the author of the spiritual priesthood which pertains to all those secured by his blood. They seize that which belongs to all Christians in order to establish their own private priesthood; how can what belongs to everyone be the private property of some? If they adjudge themselves to be the only priests, they say that Christ pertains to them alone. If all people are spiritual priests in accordance with Scripture, why do they not count themselves among all people, but separate themselves from the rest and call themselves the only external priests contrary to all Scripture?

‘...the sonne of perdyction/which is an adversarye & is exalted above all that is called God or that is worshyppedso that he doth syt in the temple of God, boastyng hym selfe to be God’ (as per the Great Bible).

⁴¹¹ Ascham uses a Greek font here. This word (Archierea) is used in the New Testament to denote the high-priest at Jerusalem. The margin note highlights ‘The Priests of Cologne’.

⁴¹² Rainerus, *Pantheologica*.

<p>[111] <i>Nam si una syllaba in novo testament est, quae sacerdotium sacrificorum exprimat, & non ad universam societatem Christianae religionis referat, iusta reprehensione teneat. In communi officio omnium Christianorum, non in privato ministerio quorundam sacrificorum sacerdotium cernitur. At quid dico? Oblitus fere sum mei. Iam inveni in Scripturis, ubi ministri sacerdotes vocantur. Iam habeo quo se defendant sacrifici: nam si sacerdotio privato fungi velint, sacerdotes Iovis in Actibus habent [Act.14.], & sacerdotes Dianae quos imitentur: sacerdotes autem Christi in ministerio nullos proferre possunt. Hactenus peragravimus ea Scripturae loca in quibus sacerdotium sacrificorum sedem habere potuerit: cum verò non sedem, sed nomen quidem in scriptura habeat, miror qua audacia ministerium Evangelii, & re & nomine contemnunt: sacerdotium verò sacrificii, repugnante Paulo, suscipiunt. Ostendunt quem Deum sequuntur: Christum quidem non sequuntur, nam audi manifestam scripturam: Nemo sibi honorem suscipit, sed [Hebr.5.] qui vocatus est à Deo: Christus, sacerdos summus, non semetipsum dignum censuit ut fieret</i></p> <p>[112] ἀρχιερεὺς (archiereus)[Summus sacerdos.], sed qui loquutus est ad illum dicens, Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te, tu es sacerdos in aeternum. Nostri sacerdotes impudentissimi sunt: nam Scriptura nunquam alloquitur eos nunquam mandat sacerdotium illis: sed illi ipsi non vocati, in novum sacerdotii honorem semetipsos intruserunt. Christus Scripturam habet, & licet filius Dei esset, obedientiam tamen didicit, nec sacerdos fit, nisi evocatus, voce patris: nostri sacerdotes Scripturam nullam habent, sed contempto ministerio Pauli, spreto exemplo Christi, glorificant semetipsos ut fiant sacerdotes: non habentes vocem Domini, cui</p>	<p>For if there is one syllable in the New Testament which describes⁴¹³ the priesthood of sacrificers and doesn't refer to the universal community of the Christian religion, let me justly be held in contempt. The priesthood is perceived (to be) for the common function of all Christians not for the private ministry of certain sacrificers. But what am I saying? I am almost forgetful of myself. I have already located in Scripture where ministers are called priests. Now I have the means by which the sacrificers can defend themselves. For if they wish to discharge a private priesthood, they have the priests of Jove in the Acts⁴¹⁴ and the priests of Diana whom they could imitate. However, they can proffer no priests in the ministry of Christ. Up until now, we have gone through these places in Scripture in which the priesthood of sacrificers might have had a place. Since indeed it doesn't have a place and not even a name in Scripture, I wonder with what audacity they slight the ministry of the Gospel both in fact and name; indeed, the sacrificers take up the priesthood even when Paul resists it. They demonstrate which God they follow; indeed, they don't follow Christ, for listen to clear Scripture: 'No one takes honour for himself but he who has been called by God'.⁴¹⁵ Christ, the highest priest, did not consider his own self⁴¹⁶ worthy to become</p> <p>a high priest, but the one who spoke to him saying 'You are my son, I brought you forth today, you are a priest for ever'.⁴¹⁷ Our priests are utterly shameless. For Scripture never addresses them and never entrusts the priesthood to them; but those men who have not themselves been summoned have forced their own selves into the new honour of priesthood. Christ occupies Scripture and, even though he was the son of God, still learnt obedience and would not have become a priest unless called forth by the voice of his father. Our priests occupy no Scripture, but, with the ministry of Paul slighted and Christ's example spurned, they glorify their own selves to become priests. They do not have</p>
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⁴¹³ The verb *exprimere* can refer to translation or rendering from another language; Ascham is almost certainly thinking here about the extent to which the terms of New Testament Greek can sustain these concepts.

⁴¹⁴ In Acts 14:13, there is a reference to the priest of Jupiter 'which would have done a sacrifice' but Barnabas and Paul chastised him.

⁴¹⁵ Hebrews 5:4. Ascham's wording differs from the Vulgate and Erasmus which read (respectively): *nec quisquam sumit sibi honorem sed vocatur a deo*; and *nemo sibi ipsi usurpat honorem sed qui vocatur etiam a deo*. Ascham again prefers the past participle *vocatus* as Luther used in his German Bible (*berufen*) and as used in the Greek (albeit a present) καλούμενος (*kaloumenos*). Tyndale wrote 'And no man taketh honour vnto him silfe but he that is called of God'.

⁴¹⁶ *semet* = *se* and *ipse* elided.

⁴¹⁷ From *Christus* on p.111 and ff, Ascham is quoting Hebrews 5:5-6. The margin note translates as 'the highest priest'.

<p><i>obediant: sed κατὰ ἀνθρώπων (kata anthrōpōn) [1.Corinth.9.], ut disertè Paulus loquitur, universum sacerdotium suum architectantur. Nam, da mihi doctissimum sacerdotem, experîre, an audeat committere causam sacerdotii externi, iudicio verbi Dei, semota omni humana doctrina: accipe Evangelium Christi, summove reliquos libros omnes: dic, cūr stas solus in altari non dispensans aliis? dic scripturam, cuius auctoritate tu sacrificator es prò vivis & mortuis? dic scripturam, ubi esus</i></p> <p><i>[113] [H] ministri est sacrificium, potiùs quàm alterius hominis? Si regia Maiestas accipiat in manus Evangelium, & iubeat sacerdotes ut ostendant loca ubi explicantur sacerdotium externum & Missa, quae duae res ministerium verbi & sacramentorum aut sustulerunt, aut obscurarunt, quid proferrent sacerdotes? Proferant quid possunt. Profectò tenebrae externi sacerdotii non possunt ferre aspectum lucis Evangelii. Iudicium scripturae cum Christo abiiciunt, sententiam Ecclesiae suae cum Papa recipiunt, caecam consuetudinem, non lucem verbi DEI sequentes. Petrus monet eos [1.Pet.3.], ut parati sint ad respondendum cuilibet petenti: vide arrogantiam omnium Papistarum: Si simplex vir, qui omnia Christo & eius Evangelio tribuit: qui talis est de quo Psalmus loquitur, Qui in mandatis eius volet nimis: si hic (inquàm) veniat ad sacerdotem, & rogat, Quare sacrificat pro aliis? Quid sacerdos facit? Non respondet petenti, ut Petrus monet: sed cum convitio traducit ad aliam rem dicens: Quid tu Heretice aut tu turbulente</i></p> <p><i>[114] contrà sacrificium dicere potes? An tu sapientior tot patribus? An tibi stulto ista DEUS revelat, & abscondit tot sapientibus? Aut refuta quod facimus, aut comproba quod dicimus. Respondet simplex vir, Nec vana peregrinationes, nec inanes indulgentiae longis refutationibus tolluntur: verùm, si defensores talium nugarum iubeantur adferre doctrinam DEI, tùm tenebrae illae, admota luce, facile dispelluntur.</i></p>	<p>the command of the Lord whom they should obey, but, as Paul clearly says, they construct their own universal priesthood in accordance with man.⁴¹⁸ For give me a most learned priest to prove whether he dares to commit the reason for the external priesthood to the judgement of the Word of God when all human doctrine has been dispensed with. Accept the Gospel of Christ, cast away all other books. Speak, why do you stand alone at the altar not dispensing to others? Speak of the Scripture on whose authority you are a sacrificer for the living and the dead. Speak of the Scripture where an eating</p> <p>is a sacrifice of the minister rather than of the other man. If the royal Majesty were to take the Gospel into his hands and were to order priests to indicate the places where the external priesthood and the Mass – the two things which have either removed the ministry of the Word and sacraments or obscured⁴¹⁹ them – are treated, what would the priests bring forward? Let them bring forward what they are able. At any rate, the shadows of the external priesthood are not able to bear the sight of the light of the Gospel. They reject judgement of Scripture with Christ, they accept the will of their own Church with the Pope, following blind custom not the light of the Word of God. Peter advises them to prepare to respond to anyone asking.⁴²⁰ Perceive the arrogance of all Papists. If a simple man who attributes everything to Christ and to his Gospel, the sort of man about whom the Psalm says: ‘the man who greatly delights in his commandments’,⁴²¹ if this man (I say) comes to a priest and asks why he sacrifices on behalf of others, what does the priest do? He does not respond to the man asking, as Peter exhorts, but, with a loud reproach, directs him to another matter, saying: ‘How can you, a heretic, or you, an agitator,</p> <p>speak against the sacrifice? Are you wiser than so many Fathers? Or perhaps GOD reveals those matters to you who are stupid and hides it from so many who are wise? Either refute what we do, or concur with what we say’. The simple man replies: ‘Neither empty wanderings nor worthless indulgences are removed by lengthy refutations’. But if the apologists of such nonsense were ordered to bring forth the doctrine of GOD, then those shadows, when light has been brought near, are</p>
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⁴¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 9:8.

⁴¹⁹ *obscurarunt* = *obscuraverunt*.

⁴²⁰ 1 Peter 3:15. Ascham follows Erasmus’s wording which is very different to the Vulgate: *parati semper ad satisfactionem omni poscenti*....

⁴²¹ Psalm 111.1 (V/GS) /112.1 (H/P). Ascham’s wording matches the Latin Vulgate.

Papistae faciunt, quemadmodum pueri solent colludere. Papista, ut ludificet totum mundum, abdit se in latebras: Christianus quaerit & interrogat, Ubi es Papista cum tua doctrina? ille in tenebris respondet, Hic vel hîc sum: Christiano quaerendo palpat, nec tamen invenit: at reperto ostio aperîre conatur, ut lux permeans omnes recessus retegat, iubetquè ut accedat ad lucem: Papista clamat, Nolo ostium aperîri, sed tu ipse inveni si potes: nam si in luce versamur, nimis facilè me deprehendes, cùm palpando per te hoc numquam faceres.

Papista hoc iàm fert, lucem non tolerat,

[115] [Hii] recludit ostium, tenebras quaerit: nam si in luce verbi DEI haec agerent, omnes hae ludificationes citò frigerent. Eòdem modo, si sacerdotium externum veniret ante tribunal verbi DEI, ut redderet rationem eorum verborum, quibus consecrantur ab Episcopo omnes sacerdotes, (verba haec sunt: Accipe potestatem offerendi sacrificium Deo, Missamque celebrandi, tàm pro vivis quàm pro defunctis) quid diceret sacerdotium externum? aut taceret, aut falsos testes Papam & humanam doctrinam adferret.

Ubi vestigium talis potestatis in tota scriptura? Adduceret loca de ministerio Evangelii & sacramentorum? Attendè Lector. Ministerium ponunt in Diaconatu, quod officium iàm re nullum in Ecclesia, nisi quoddam ludibrium DEI, totum simiacum & histrionicum. Sacerdotium autèm, (inquiunt) transit à ministerio, hoc est, à Paulo ad Papam, à scriptura ad humanam doctrinam. Quid dicemus? totum ordinem sacerdotalem, ex Aarone esse, vel ex Papa? Profectò

[116] ex Christo consecratio eorum non est.

Christus ministerium tradidit praedicandi verbi, & dispensandi fidelitèr aliis sacramenta: transîre verò

easily dispelled.

The Papists act in the same way that young boys are accustomed to play together. The Papist, in order to delude the whole world, hides himself in hiding places. The Christian man seeks and asks: 'Where are you, Papist, with your doctrine?' He answers from the shadows 'I'm either here or here'. He coaxes the seeking Christian; however, he doesn't find him. Additionally, when the door has been discovered,⁴²² he tries to open it so that the light passing through uncovers all the inner recesses and orders him to come to the light;⁴²³ the Papist cries 'I don't want the door to be opened, but you yourself find it if you can. For if we remain in the light, you will catch me too easily, although you would never do this through your own efforts by coaxing'.⁴²⁴

Thus the Papist now avers: he does not tolerate the light, he

shuts up the door and seeks the shadows. For if they were to do these things in the light of the Word of God, all these games would soon flag. In the same way, if the external priesthood came before a tribunal of the Word of God in order to give an account of their words with which all priests are consecrated by a bishop (and these words are: 'Accept the power of offering a sacrifice to God and of celebrating the Mass for the living as well as for the departed'⁴²⁵), what would the external priesthood say? Either it would stay silent or put forward spurious witnesses, the Pope and human doctrine.

Where in the whole of Scripture is there a trace of such power? Would it draw on places from the ministry of the Gospel and the sacraments? Reader, take heed. They locate the ministry in the office of a deacon, an office which now counts for nothing in the Church, unless as some joke of God, all apeing⁴²⁶ and histrionics. The priesthood, however, (they say) passes from the ministry, that is, from Paul to the Pope, from Scripture to human doctrine. What shall we say? That the whole priestly rank derives from Aaron or from the Pope? Certainly,

their consecration is not derived from Christ.

Christ handed over the ministry of the preaching of the Word and of faithfully administering the sacraments to

⁴²² Strictly speaking, according to classical rules, this ought not to be an ablative absolute.

⁴²³ In classical Latin, *iubeo* is followed by the infinitive in an indirect command, not *ut*.

⁴²⁴ This is difficult, but Ascham seems to mean that someone could not flatter the papist into such disclosure.

⁴²⁵ The wording of priestly ordination contained in the Roman Missal.

⁴²⁶ The word *simiacum* must be related to the word *simia* used as a term of abuse in classical times.

à ministerio ad sacerdotium Christus numquàm instituit. Hic ordo sacerdotalis, religionem Christi propemodùm universam sustulit: nam doctrinam nullam ferè tradit, sacramenta fidelitèr non dispensat, Missam pro Evangelii praedicatione diligentèr celebrat, prò communi dispensatione sacramentorum solus sacrificat: signis Iudaicis hoc sacrilegium obscurat, & inanibus praestigiis totum populum DEI ludificat, En religionem Ecclesiae, quam ordo sacerdotalis aedificat.

Ordo sacerdotalis septemplici gradu constat. Quibus verbis? Si ridère vis, vel potiùs deflère Ecclesiam hiis ludibriis ludificatam, lege Lombardum intèr omnes [4. Sentent.] [Dist.24.] Papistas optimum, & doctissimum: vide quomodo compellunt Christum invitum statuere hos ordines: Spiritum sanctum de caelo in hos ordines devocant: Quorsum? Ut inane nomen ordinis, cum solenni pompa ad nullum usum celebratum,

[117] [Hiii] & Deum & hominem deludant. Nam spiritum sanctum accipiunt, ut nihil omninò agant: & tùm spreto ministerio verbi & sacramentorum, quod Paulus tradit, ad sacerdotium transiliunt, ubi Missam celebrant, hoc est, pro praedicatione Evangelii, pro dispensatione sacramentorum, populum inanibus praestigiis in ignorantia & falsa religione detinent.

Verùm, si Minister nunquàm ad Ecclesiam accederet, nisi eo animo, ut populum institueret verbo DEI: vel ut populo dispensaret fidelitèr sacramenta Dei, quod scriptura solùm requirit, melius actum esset cum Ecclesia Christi: nemo tùm auderet suscipere nomen Presbyteri, qui non doctus & honestus esset: cùm contrà, quàm diù Missa est illa religio, quam populus solùm veneratur, fucis istis caecis ducibus Ecclesia Christi nunquàm exonerabitur.

Si verò sacerdotes missâre & sacrificâre pro aliis volunt, aequum est ut ostendant qua autoritate hoc faciunt. Si Christi sunt, Christum authorem sequantur: veritatem ipsam, hoc est, verbum

others. And indeed, Christ never resolved to go across from the ministry to the priesthood. This priestly rank has removed nearly the whole of Christ's religion. For it bestows almost no doctrine, does not dispense the sacraments faithfully, carefully celebrates the Mass instead of preaching of the Gospel and sacrifices alone instead of a public dispensation of the sacraments. It obscures this sacrilege with its Jewish signs and makes a sport of the entire population of GOD with worthless magic. Behold the religion of the Church which the priestly order builds.

The priestly order establishes itself at seven levels. With which words? If you wish to laugh or rather to weep over the Church made a mockery of with these jokes, read Lombard, (considered) the best and most learned among all Papists.⁴²⁷ Observe how they compel Christ against his will to erect these orders and how they call down the Holy Spirit from Heaven into their orders. For what? In order to mock the name of the order as worthless, celebrated as it is with solemn pomp for no reason, and (to mock) both God and man.

For they welcome the Holy Spirit in order that they may do nothing at all. And then, with the ministry of the Word and the sacraments scorned which Paul bestows, they leap over to the priesthood where they celebrate the Mass; that is, in the place of the preaching of the Gospel, in place of the dispensation of the sacraments, they keep the people in ignorance and false religion with their worthless magic.

In truth, if a minister were never to approach a Church, unless with a mind of such a sort that he might anchor the people in the Word of God or faithfully administer the sacraments of God to the people - which is all Scripture requires -, it would have been (settled) better with the Church of Christ. Then no one would dare to assume the name of presbyter who was not a learned and honourable man, while on the contrary, so long as the Mass is that religious rite which is the only one the people venerate, the Church of Christ will never be exonerated from those pretences under blind leaders.

If, in truth, the priests wish to perform the Mass and to sacrifice on behalf of others, it is fair that they demonstrate on what authority they do this. If they are

⁴²⁷ Lombard's Sentences, book 4, distinction 24, 'On Sacred Orders'. In chapter 1 (131), note 2, he states: 'There are seven degrees or orders of spiritual offices as is plainly handed down by the sayings of the Holy Fathers and as is shown by the example of our head, namely Jesus Christ. And in chapter 2(132) 'There are seven for the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit' (translations as per *Peter Lombard: The Sentences*, trans. G. Silano (Toronto, 2007-2010), book IV, On the Doctrine of Signs). Up until the Royal Injunctions of 1535, Peter Lombard's *Sentences* was the standard textbook at Cambridge for students in theology.

<p>[118] <i>eius proponant: errores humanae doctrinae non obiiciant. Christus Iesus nihil facit, vel dicit, in toto Evangelio, quod non probat Scriptura: non adigit Christus Iudaeos ad hanc difficultatem, ut illi improbent eius doctrinam: sed ille nullam doctrinam ponit, quam non ex Scripturis ostendit. Vetustissimi canones Apostolorum Graecè scripti [kánon pe] (kanon pe), per Clementum aediti, iubent omnes Epsicopas Ecclesiae, ut consisterent intrà fines verbi Dei: sin alitèr, praedicunt, multas contentiones dissipaturas tranquillitatem Ecclesiae: id quod cernitur planissimè nostris temporibus, cùm doctrina externi sacerdotii, κατὰ ἄνθρωπων (kata anthrōpōn) constructa, diruit aedificationem Iesu Christi in Ecclesia. Haec res tam aperta est, ut tegi non possit: tam impia est, ut defendi non debeat. Verùm ordo sacerdotalis, qui non Christum, sed Ecclesiam suam Deum habent, in cuius verba uncti omnes iuraverunt, qui caecam consuetudinem optimam doctrinam esse ducunt, hîc certò scio, fremunt, murmurant, mussitant, patres contemptos clamitant: cùm illi potissimum non patres solùm, sed</i></p> <p>[119] [Hiiii] <i>patrem ipsum coelestem contemnunt: tragicis exclamationibus omnia complent, Scripturae testimoniis nunquàm respondent. Et vide insignia Papistarum [Insignia Papistarum.], quibus notissimi sunt. Obiiciunt aliis ignorantium Scripturae, cùm illi ipsi ignarissimi existant: cognitionem linguarum, scientiam bonarum artium nec habent, nec amant: nisi aliqui inter eos sunt, qui defecerunt à Scriptura ad humanam doctrinam, hoc est, à Christo ad Papam. Libertatem carnis aliis imputant; cùm natio sacerdotum, otio, libidine, viscerationibus, & ebrietatibus, suprà modum, diffluunt.</i></p> <p><i>Sacramentarios vocant, cùm illi soli fidelem usum sacramentorum sustulerint, & humanas nugas in</i></p>	<p>of Christ, they should follow Christ as an author; they should set forth truth itself, that is, his Word;</p> <p>they should not offer errors of human doctrine. Jesus Christ does nothing or says nothing in the whole of the Gospel which Scripture doesn't prove. Christ does not bring the Jews into this difficulty with the result that they reject his doctrine, but he proposes no doctrine which he does not show from Scripture. The oldest canons of the Apostles written in Greek, [canon pe.⁴²⁸] brought forth by St Clement, order all the bishops of the Church to remain within the bounds of the Word of God;⁴²⁹ but if they do not, they predict that many controversies will disrupt the harmony of the Church, something which is very clearly perceived in our times when the doctrine of the external priesthood, constructed according to man, has destroyed the edifice of Jesus Christ in the Church. This phenomenon is so obvious that it is not possible to be hidden, (it is) so wicked that it ought not to be defended. In truth, the priestly order, those who hold not Christ but their Church as God, unto whose words they, anointed,⁴³⁰ have all sworn, those who maintain that blind custom is the best doctrine, on these points, I know for certain (that) they froth, they mumble, they mutter, they cry out that the Fathers are scorned, when it is they above all that scorn not only the Fathers but</p> <p>the heavenly father himself. They fill everything with tragic exclamations and never respond to the testimony of Scripture. And note the signs of Papists for which they are best known. They reproach others for being ignorant of Scripture, when it is they themselves who are very ignorant. They neither have knowledge of languages or expertise in good arts nor rate them, save only that there are some among them who have defected from Scripture to human doctrine, that is, from Christ to the Pope. They impute licence of the flesh to others, when a nation of priests are abandoned to leisure, wanton lust, gorging and intoxication beyond moderation.⁴³¹</p> <p>They speak of 'sacramentarians' when it is those men</p>
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⁴²⁸ of the canon (see below).

⁴²⁹ St Clement, bishop of Rome in the First Century AD and considered a Father of the Church. The First Letter of Clement addressed to the early Christians of Corinth served to encourage the establishment of a harmonious and peaceful church. It was written in Greek and contains many references to Paul's Epistles and the Acts. It was listed as canonical in 'Canon 85' of the Canons of the Apostles. See also O.M. Bakke, 'Concord and Peace': a rhetorical analysis of the First Letter of Clement with an emphasis on the language of unity and sedition (Tübingen, 2001).

⁴³⁰ The printed version does have *uncti* here, but it is possible that it was originally *iuncti*, ie. 'jointly' which might perhaps make better sense. Nonetheless, my translation assumes *uncti*.

⁴³¹ Note Cicero in *de Oratore* (3.32) uses *otio diffuentes*.

eorum loca suffecerunt: atque laesi sacramenti illos solos insimulant, qui usum sacramenti ad institutionem Christi revocant. Contemptores veteris Ecclesiae, & sanctorum Patrum alios arguunt: cum illi ipsi ab usu veteris Ecclesiae, à doctrina sanctorum Patrum longissimè discrepant. Si quid elicere possunt ex Patribus, quod

[120] primo aspectu videatur Papismum, hoc est, Papae doctrinam defendere, in promptu, in memoria, in scripto habent: aliàs facile omittunt.

Sanctissimus Ioannes Evangelista, plus quàm debuit, Angelo tribuit, & propterea reprehensus est: nostri sacerdotes reprehendi nolunt, si eam fidem Doctoribus adiungant, quam nullus Doctor comprobatur, sed omnes ad unum condemnant: consilium Doctorum, in Scripturis interpretandis, omnes amplexantur: in fundanda nova aliqua doctrina, absque aperto testimonio canonicae Scripturae, auctoritatem Doctorum, nulli Doctores imitantur. Tu credis Doctoribus absque scriptura, ego non credo: uter nostrum rectius facit? Referamus hanc litem, si vis, iudicio ipsorum Doctorum. En, quem Doctorem ego adfero pro me.

Augustinus ad Hieronymum, de auctoritate canonicorum Scriptorum sola sequenda scribit, & subdit hanc sententiam de Doctoribus: Alios autem ita lego (inquit Augustinus) [Augustinus] ut quantilibet sanctitate, doctrinaque praepolleant,

[121] [H.v] non ideò verum putem, quia ipsi ita senserunt: sed quia mihi, vel per illos authores canonicos, vel probabili ratione, quod à vero non abhorreant, persuadere potuerunt. Et de Cypriani summi Doctoris auctoritate, audi etiam quid dicit Augustinus: Huius epistolae [Augustinus] auctoritate non teneor, quia literas Cypriani, non ut canonicas habeo, sed eas ex canonicas considero: & quod in eis divinarum scripturarum auctoritati congruit, cum laude eius recipio: quod autem non congruit, cum pace eius respuo. Age tu vicissim, quisquis es, qui Doctoribus tantum tribuis, etiam si

alone who have removed the faithful use of the sacraments and have put human trifles in their place. And they charge those men who are the only ones to recall the use of the sacrament to the will of Christ with injuring the sacrament. They declare other men despisers of the old Church and of the sacred Fathers, when they themselves depart very far from the usage of the old Church and from the doctrine of the sacred Fathers. If they are able to draw out something from the Fathers which

at first sight seems papist, that is, to defend the doctrine of the Pope, they are at hand⁴³² to commit it to memory and to writing. The rest they omit without a care.

The most sacred Evangelist John ascribed more than he ought to the Angel and was reproved on that account.⁴³³ Our priests don't wish to be reproved if they give that credit to the Doctors which no Doctor confirms but all unanimously reject. They all embrace the counsel of the Doctors in interpreting the Scriptures; in establishing some new doctrine without the transparent testimony of canonical Scripture, no Doctors imitate the authority of Doctors. You trust in the Doctors without Scriptural basis, I don't trust (it). Which of us acts more properly? Let us refer this case, if you are willing, to the judgment of the Doctors themselves. See this Doctor I set before me.

Augustine writes to Jerome⁴³⁴ about the authority - which alone must be followed - of the canonical writers and adds this sentiment from the Doctors: However much I read (says Augustine) that others that are as superior as you like in sanctity and in doctrine,

I would not think it true just because they themselves have supposed it to be thus, but because they have been able to persuade me, either through those canonical authors or through credible reason, that they don't shrink from the truth. And about the authority of the greatest Doctor, Cyprian, hear what even Augustine says: 'I am not bound by the authority of this letter because I don't hold the epistle of Cyprian as canonical but consider it as outside the canon. And whatever in it corresponds to the authority of the divine Scriptures I receive it with praise of him, but what, however, does not correspond, I spit it out, with his pardon'.⁴³⁵ Come, you in turn,

⁴³² *in promptu (esse) habere*, meaning to 'be at hand', is a phrase used by Cicero in *Academicae Quaestiones* 1.2.4 and in *De Officiis* 1.30.105.

⁴³³ Revelation 22.

⁴³⁴ Augustine's Epistle 82.

⁴³⁵ Augustine *Ad Cresconium* (as referred to above).

nullam scripturam attulerint: profer unum Doctorem, qui tantam auctoritatem Doctoribus unquam tribuit: si non potes, cūr stulte hoc tribuis illis, quod ipsi prudenter adimunt sibi? cūr Doctoribus invitis, & recusantibus, sine aperta scriptura adhaeres: manifestum autem mandatum Christi, in fidelitè dispensando corpore & poculo eius aliis, sine ullo metu relinquis? Cūr Doctorem invitum, & coactum, ad te tantopere trahis: à Christo te invitante, & sequente, libentè deflectis? Sed hoc

[122] quotidianum est omnibus Papistis, in diverticulis potiùs [Papistarum mos quotidianus] humanae doctrinae consistere, quàm rectam Christi viam in Scriptura praemonstratam persequi. Et si vis habère certissimum signum, quo prodit se semper haec natio, ausculta quam vocem in doctrina sua probanda usurpat. Quid ait? Christus sic loquitur, Sic verbum Dei docet, Sic Paulus? nequaquam: sed, Hoc semper Ecclesia praecipit, Patres ità tradiderunt, Prudentissimi viri sic sentiunt, Haeretici soli negant, Catholici hoc tenent. Et hoc nomine Catholici quomodo nunc abutuntur homines? Produxerunt in eum locum, in quo ponitur apud Graecos nomen Sophistae [Sophistae]: & utriusque rei persimilis est ratio, nisi quòd Sophistae concesserunt in infimam conditionem Reipublicae: Catholici [Catholici] verò nostri mysterium habent in hoc suo nomine, quatenùs clancùlum referunt & se & nomen suum ad eum pastorem, qui se ipse Catholicum & οἰκουµενικον (oikoumenikon) nominat. Quamobrem, nihil aliud nunc recinit hoc nomen Catholicum, quàm ab Evangelio Christi ad imperium Papae defectorem esse. Lucem verbi

[123] Dei odèrunt bubones isti Babylonici [Bubones Babylonici]: nec tenebras sacerdotii externi splendori Evangelii committere audent. Et quia malè faciunt, ad lucem non accedunt, ut ait Ioan: si audent, seponant ad tempus reliquos omnes libros, & hoc sacerdotium externum, cum suo sacrificio, per scripturam solam, probent. Impium est, quòd spiritum sanctum constituunt doctorem novorum

whoever you are, who attribute so much to the Doctors even if they bring forth no Scripture. Produce one Doctor who ever ascribed so much authority to the Doctors. If you cannot, why do you foolishly attribute this to them which they prudently deprive themselves of? Why do you cling to the Doctors who are unwilling and reluctant without clear Scripture, though you, without any fear, abandon the clear commandment of Christ in faithfully administering his body and cup to others? Why do you drag to yourself to such an extent a Doctor who is unwilling and forced when you gladly turn away from Christ who is inviting you and following?

But this is common to all Papists,⁴³⁶ to subsist in the by-roads of human doctrine rather than to pursue the right path of Christ as shown in Scripture. And if you wish to have a cast iron sign by which this tribe always makes itself known, hear what sayings it adopts in proving its own doctrine. What does it say? ‘Christ speaks thus’, ‘in this way teaches the Word of God’, ‘thus Paul’? Not at all, but (rather): ‘the Church always instructs this’, ‘the Fathers have taught thus’, ‘the most sensible men think like this’, ‘heretics alone deny it’ and ‘Catholics maintain this’. And how do men now misuse this name (of) ‘Catholic’? They have led it into that place in which the name of ‘sophist’ was placed by the Greeks. And the reason for each case is the same, except that the sophists yielded to the lowest rank of the State; our Catholics [Catholics] indeed maintain the mystery in this name of theirs to the extent that they secretly trace both themselves and their own name to that shepherd who (himself) calls himself Catholic and ‘universal’.⁴³⁷ On this account, this name ‘Catholic’ now resounds nothing other than to be defector from the Gospel of Christ to the power of the Pope.

Those Babylonian owls hate the light of the Word of God and they don’t dare to commit the shadows of the external priesthood to the brightness of the Gospel. And because they act wrongly, they don’t approach the light, as John says;⁴³⁸ if they dare, let them set aside for the moment all other books and let them prove this external priesthood with their sacrifice through the Scripture alone. It is wicked that they establish the Holy Spirit as

⁴³⁶ The margin note here reads: ‘the common custom of the Papists’.

⁴³⁷ This is presumably a reference to the Pope. *oikoumenikon* is an ecclesiastical word from which we get ‘ecumenical’.

⁴³⁸ Ascham may be thinking of John 8:12 here.

<p><i>dogmatum, in cultu divino, praeter ea quae sunt tradita in testamento Christi [Ioan.16.], cùm Christus pollicetur Spiritum sanctum nullam aliam doctrinam allaturum, praetèr eam, quam à Christo audierit. Cùm hoc à Christo dictum est, testamentum Christi non dùm per spiritum sanctum scriptum est: nam scriba sacrae scripturae spiritus sanctus est, testante Davide, in hoc versu [Psalm.44.]: Lingua mea calamus Scribae velociter scribentis. Itaque, aut testamentum, Christi imperfectum est testamentum, quod nemo dicere audet: aut testamentarii illi sunt [Papistae testamentarii], qui nomine spiritus sancti, novam aliquam doctrinam huic testamento Christi superaddunt. Expressis igitur verbis huius Testamenti comprobetur externum</i></p>	<p>a teacher of new dogmas in divine veneration beyond those things which have been handed down in the testimony of Christ, when Christ promises that the Holy Spirit would give effect to no other doctrine except that which it has heard⁴³⁹ from Christ.⁴⁴⁰ When this was said by Christ, the testament of Christ was not yet written through the Holy Spirit. For the scribe of sacred Scripture is the Holy Spirit as evidenced by David in this verse: ‘My tongue is a reed-pen of the Scribe writing quickly’.⁴⁴¹ Therefore either the testament, the testament of Christ, is imperfect, something no one dares to say, or those men are forgers of the testament [<i>Papists, forgers of the Testament</i>] who in the name of the Holy Spirit add some new doctrine to this testament of Christ. Therefore, with the express words of this Testament let the external</p>
<p><i>[124] sacerdotium, quod summum in Christiana religione locum iam occupat: aut Testamentarii sunt omnes sacerdotes, qui humanum inventum magis quàm Christi testamentum in quotidiano usu habent. Et ad hunc modum sacerdotes nostri, cùm rationem pro suo sacerdotio non habent: cùm Doctores absque scriptura, nihil convincunt: cum omni scriptura destituuntur: vide quo impudentiae prorumpunt. Subornant spiritum sanctum contrà Christum, vel potiùs condemnant spiritum sanctum negligentiae, quòd perfectum Christi testamentum non scripserit: & propterea de coelo, pro arbitrato suo, spiritum sanctum devocant, ut quod omisit negligentèr in scriptura, hoc restituat diligentèr in Ecclesia. Romanae religionis assertores, cùm fingunt & comminiscuntur spiritum sanctum authorem esse cuiusvis instituti sui, quid aliud docent, quàm quòd furiosa illa secta, sivè sentina Libertinorum, qui spiritu agitati & perciti, omnia nephanda perpetrant, ex Papismi cloaca & faecibus, quantacunque est, effluerit? [Libertini] Libertini iactant spiritum, cum tàm proiecta tamen & effluenti</i></p>	<p>priesthood, which now occupies the most prominent place in the Christian religion, be verified, or all priests are forgers of the Testament who make daily use of human invention more than the testament of Christ. And our priests (resort) to this method when they don’t have a reason for their own priesthood. When the Doctors have no scriptural basis, they demonstrate nothing. When they are destitute of all Scripture, see to what pitch of impudence they break forth. They suborn the Holy Spirit against Christ, or (rather) they condemn the Holy Spirit for negligence because it didn’t compose a perfect testament of Christ. And for that reason, they call down the Holy Spirit from Heaven at their own whim so that what it carelessly omitted in Scripture it might diligently restore to the Church. What else do the defenders of the Romish religion teach when they fashion and re-invent the Holy Spirit to be the author of their own institution, whatever it is, than what that raging sect or the dregs of the Libertines who, roused and excited by the spirit commit every impiety, have issued forth from the sewer and the faeces of papism, such as they are? The Libertines⁴⁴² [<i>Libertines</i>] toss about the spirit with a stupidity so obtrusive and free-flowing</p>
<p><i>[125] stoliditate, ut maxima eorum impietas, maiori si fieri potest stultitia, facile vincatur: quod</i></p>	<p>that their immense impiety, if indeed that can be accompanied by an even greater stupidity, is easily</p>

⁴³⁹ *audierit* is syncopated form of *audiverit*.

⁴⁴⁰ Ascham is paraphrasing John 16:13 here.

⁴⁴¹ Psalm 44:2 (V/GS) /45:1 (H/P). Ascham’s wording matches the Vulgate. The translation in the the Great Bible is ‘My tonge is the pen of a redy writter’.

⁴⁴² A broad term of abuse first used by John Calvin himself for those in Geneva who departed from his ideals about doctrine and conduct. .

Ioannes Calvinus [Calvinus], vir omnibus ingenii & doctrinae praesidiis instructissimus, eleganti libro aedito clarissimè ostendit. Romani iactant spiritum quoque, sed maxima cum astutia, & propterea maiori semper purioris religionis iactura. Ut secta Romanorum, & Libertinorum, scelere & impietate conspiret: Romani tamen longè superant nomine sapientiae, ut Paulus ait, ἐθελοθησκεία (ethelothrēskeia)] Libertinos non prodat solùm, sed refutet etiam propria ipsorum stultitia. Alii homines, cùm Christi verbum nec imperfectum dicere, nec novum superaddere manifestò audent, aliam viam affectant, qua humanam doctrinam in sedem verbi DEI perducant. Clamant, Evangelium Christi velatum & obscurum esse, & propterea omnia referri debère ad iudicium humanae doctrinae: quo consilio, Romana Ecclesia diligentissimè usa est, cùm universa decreta Pontificum, & tota schola Quaestionistarum, ex humanis scriptis, non divinis constant. Et ne ullus locus libidini Papae, contra Christum,

[126] reliquus esset, cautum est, ut acta Episcopi Romani inter canonicas Scripturas habeantur [Dist.19]. Et propterea sacerdotes nostri, cùm urgent Ecclesiae auctoritatem sine aperta scriptura, praetendant quod velint, Papae profectò negotium agunt: cùm Papa nullo alio praetextu defendi potest, nec unquam antea defendebatur, nisi cùm humana doctrina in locum scripturae collocatur. Et vide astutiam: verba Christi agnoscunt, sed sensum verborum non intelligunt. Et ubi quaerunt sensum? In verbo Dei? Non, sed in verbo hominis, quasi spiritus sanctus planius loquatur in Pighio, quàm in Paulo: & hoc totum agunt, ut à testimonio scripturae, ad iudicium humanae doctrinae, omnem religionem traducant. Intelligunt spiritum sanctum loquentem in humana doctrina, non intelligunt loquentem in sacra scriptura. Quòd non intelligunt, ipsi dicunt: quare intelligere nolunt, reliqui omnes intelligere possunt. De uno aut altero difficili loco non disceptant, sed universam scripturam, propter

demonstrated. John Calvin, a man extremely well furnished with every support of natural ability and learning, demonstrates the point most lucidly in an elegant book which has been published. ‘The Romans’ also toss about the spirit but with maximum cunning and, on that account, always with a greater diminution of pure religion. The result is that the school of Romans and that of Libertines blend together in wickedness and impiety. ‘The Romans’, however, are superior by far on the score of wisdom, (or), as Paul says, their ‘will worship’.⁴⁴³ Let their own characteristic stupidity not only betray the Libertines but also refute them. Some men when they don’t dare either to say that the word of Christ is imperfect or to brazenly add a new one, try out another way to lead human doctrine into the place of the Word of God. They cry out that Gospel of Christ is obscure and hidden and, for this reason, that everything ought to be referred to the determination of human doctrine. The Romish Church has deployed this strategem very carefully, since the universal decrees of the Pontiffs and the whole school of questionists consist of human writings not divine. And so that no opportunity for the caprice of the Pope against Christ remain outstanding,

it has been decreed that the deeds of a Roman bishop be considered alongside canonical Scripture.⁴⁴⁴ And for this reason our priests, when they argue for the authority of the Church without the transparency of Scripture – let them bring forward whatever they want –, without a doubt, do the work of the Pope, since it is not possible for the Pope to be defended on any other pretext, nor was he ever defended before except when human doctrine was set in the place of Scripture. And observe their cunning! They acknowledge the words of Christ, but fail to understand the sense of the words. And where do they seek the sense (of the words)? In the Word of God? No, but in the word of man, as though the Holy Spirit speaks more plainly in Pighius than in Paul. And this is their entire business so that they can bring the whole of religion from the testimony of Scripture to the determination of human doctrine. They understand the Holy Spirit speaking in human doctrine, but don’t understand it when it speaks in holy Scripture. That they don’t understand, they themselves say; why

⁴⁴³ A word used by Paul in Colossians 2:23.

⁴⁴⁴ This provision of Canon Law which stipulated that ‘the decrees of the Bishop of Rome ought to be kept perpetually of every man, without bany repugnance as God’s Word...’ (Dist.19 of the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*) was included in Cranmer’s *Collection of Extracts from the Canon Law, showing the extravagant pretensions of the Church of Rome*: see vol.2, *Remains of Thomas Cranmer...collected and arranged by Rev. Henry Jenkyns* (Oxford, 1833), p.2.

difficultatem, libenter repudiant, ut ad lucem scilicet humanae doctrinae omnes controversias referant.

[127] Sapientiores sunt doctissimis Patribus veteris Ecclesiae, qui nihil asserere volunt, quod scriptura probare non possunt: sapientiores ipso Christo, qui omnia facit, & omnia dicit, ut compleretur scriptura, ut haec ipsa vox toties in Evangelio iactata testatur. Si quis hodie in medium adfert scripturam, quid ait Papista? Diabolus, inquit, adfert scripturam, Haeretici omnes adferunt scripturam. Quid hinc colligis? Scripturam praetereundam esse, & doctrinam humanam inculcandam? Si sic sentis, tùm Diabolus multò te sapientior existit, qui potiùs via recta abuti, quam perversam sequi maluerit. Et hoc dicto tuo nihil perversius esse potest. Commemoras Diabolum & Haeticum abutentem scripturis: quare non commemoras Christum, aut sanctum aliquem Patrem, qui nihil unquàm comprobant, aut probari volunt, nisi per apertas scripturas? Nè imiteris quod Diabolus & Haeticus perverse faciunt: & similiter, nè omittas, quod Christus & sancti Patres semper faciunt.

Si Patres volunt omnes res probari per

[128] Scripturam, cùm tu suggillas me cùm infero scripturam? Imò, ex malo facto Diaboli, hoc bonum exemplum capio, nihil omnino probandum esse nisi per scripturam [Nihil omnino probandum est nisi per scripturam]. Nam triplicem impetum Diaboli, gravissimè contrà Christum intentatum per hanc machinam, Scriptum est,] Christus fregit & repulit per eandem ipsam machinam, Scriptum est:] ut, nisi Scriptum est] inducatur, Diabolus nunquam vincatur. Quo igitur gladio Christus usus est adversus principem Haeticorum, eòdem gladio, & non alio, utamur adversus membra eius. Verum astutiam Diaboli in inferenda scriptura, propter maximam probabilitatem, omnes intelligunt: stultitiam verò Papae, cum suis, in omittenda scriptura, ad apertam eorum ignominiam, omnes animadvertunt. Papistae omnes hìc duplici [Papistae dupliciter errant] errore tenentur, cùm

they don't want to understand, all the rest are able to understand. They don't dispute about one or another difficult passage, but nonchalantly repudiate the whole of Scripture on account of its difficulty with the result that they naturally refer all controversies to the light of human doctrine.

They are (no doubt) wiser than the most learned Fathers of the old Church who are willing to defend nothing which they can't prove though Scripture. They are wiser than Christ himself who does everything and says everything with the result that Scripture is fulfilled and with the result that this voice itself is used and publicised so frequently in the Gospel. Today, if anyone carries forth Scripture into their midst, what says the Papist? He says 'the Devil brings forth Scripture; all those who are Heretics bring forth Scripture'. What do you infer from this? That Scripture must be bypassed and human doctrine emphasised? If you feel like this, then the Devil emerges as much wiser than you, (you) who have preferred to abuse the right way than to follow the wrong one. And nothing can be more misplaced than this notion of yours. You call to mind the Devil and the Heretic abusing Scripture; why don't you call to mind Christ or another sacred Father who never sanction anything or want nothing to be sanctioned unless through open Scripture? Don't imitate what the Devil and the Heretic do wrongly and, similarly, don't leave off doing what Christ and the sacred Fathers always do.

If the Fathers are willing for every matter to be scrutinised through

Scripture, why do you scoff at me when I raise the subject of Scripture? Indeed, moving from the bad example of the Devil, I seize upon this good example, that nothing at all must be attested to unless through Scripture. For the triple attack of the Devil, which has been very seriously directed against Christ, Christ has dismantled through this strategem, 'it is written', and driven it away through the self-same stratagem, 'it is written', because unless 'it is written' is brought in, the Devil is never refuted. Therefore let us use the sword which Christ used against the chief of the Heretics, the same sword and no other, against his limbs. In truth, everyone understands, on account of its considerable probability, the cunning of the Devil in attacking Scripture. And so everyone notices the stupidity of the Pope with his followers in omitting Scripture to their obvious detriment. Here, all Papists are held in a two-fold error when they refer everything to the

<p><i>omnia referunt ad iudicium humanae doctrinae: primùm, quòd exemplum Christi & vetustissimorum patrum contemnunt, qui semper inducunt scripturam: deindè, quòd malunt privata arrogantia effèrri in doctrina humana illustranda, quàm astutiam Diaboli sequi</i></p> <p><i>[129] [I] in divina Scriptura usurpanda. Et vide quàm insignitèr peccant. Diabolus habet duo illustria scelera, arrogantiam & astutiam [Arrogantia & astutia duo illustria Diaboli scelera]: nostri Papistae magis student imitâri arrogantiam Diaboli, quàm astutiam: ut quo vitio Diabolus excellit, in eodem quoque Papistae praestâre videantur. Et reverà, Papa cum suis aliquam rationem hîc sequuntur: quoniam ex dignitate eorum est, Diabolum potiùs in leone quàm in vulpe imitâri: atque, nisi Papa sic faceret, Christum à clavo navis ecclesiasticae, & a throno testamenti eius numquàm summovertet. Verùm quod ad obscuritatem [2. Pet.3.] Scripturae attinet, novimus quid Divus Petrus de certis hominibus loquitur, qui Pauli doctrinam pervertunt, & reliquas omnes scripturas. Petrus hoc non dicit, ut abducat homines à testimonio scripturarum, ad humanum iudicium: nam proximo verbo exhortatur ut crescant in cognitione Christi Iesu, quam cognitionem librâri, non ex officina privatae interpretationis, & humani cerebri, sed è schola spiritus sancti, quae est testamentum Iesu Christi, depromi debère docet.</i></p> <p><i>[130] Fuerunt etiam temporibus Pauli, ignavi homines, qui Ecclesiam abducere conati sunt ab Evangelio, obscuritatem praetendentes: [2.Cor.4] Paulus hiis hominibus, si non iracunde, certè vehementèr respondet, se non ambulâre in astutia, sed in manifestatione veritatis: Quòd si Evangelium nostrum (inquit) adhuc velatum est, in hiis qui pereunt velatum est, quorum incredulorum sensum</i></p>	<p>determination of human doctrine. Firstly, because they scorn the example of Christ and the most ancient Fathers who always bring forward Scripture. Secondly, because they prefer private arrogance to be elevated in advertising human doctrine than to follow the cunning of the Devil</p> <p>in usurping divine Scripture.⁴⁴⁵ And behold how remarkably they sin. The Devil has two well-known crimes: arrogance and cunning. Our Papists are more eager to imitate the arrogance of the Devil than his cunning so that in whichever vice the Devil excels the Papists also seem to be pre-eminent in the same! And in truth, the Pope and his followers follow another reason on this front, seeing that it is from their own authority that they imitate the Devil in the form of a lion rather than a fox⁴⁴⁶; and if the Pope did not do this, he would never remove Christ from the helm of the ecclesiastical ship and from the throne of his testament. Indeed, as far as this relates to the obscurity of Scripture, we know what St. Peter speaks about certain men who pervert the doctrine of Paul and all other Scriptural writings.⁴⁴⁷ Peter doesn't say this in order to draw men away from the testimony of Scripture to human judgment, for he subsequently encourages them to increase their knowledge of Jesus Christ and teaches that this knowledge ought to be pondered and drawn out not from the workshop of individual interpretation and man's understanding, but from the school of the Holy Spirit which constitutes the testament of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>There were, even in the time of Paul, idle men who tried to lead the Church away from the Gospel using its obscurity as an excuse. Paul, if not angrily, without doubt vigorously, replies to these men 'that he does not walk in cunning but in the manifestation of truth'; and that 'if', (he says) 'our Gospel is still hidden, it is hidden in those who are lost, whose perception, being without faith, God of this age has blinded, so that the light of the Gospel doesn't shine upon them'.⁴⁴⁸ In another part,</p>
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⁴⁴⁵ This is an interesting argument, namely that they are worse for not following the Devil! It seems to follow on from his point on p.127 that Papists are worse than the Devil in their inclination to abuse the right way than to follow the wrong one.

⁴⁴⁶ A reference to Aesop's fable about the lion and the fox. Presumably Ascham here means that the Papists, like lions, have no scruples or fear in doing this at all. The word for 'fox' (*vulpis*) can also denote cunning.

⁴⁴⁷ 2 Peter 3:16-18 where Peter refers to how some things are hard to understand and the dangers of wresting Paul's Epistles and other Scriptures to their own destruction.

⁴⁴⁸ 2 Corinthians 4:2-4. Ascham broadly follows the Vulgate and Erasmus, but has condensed the three verses. He follows the verb *ambulo* of the Vulgate over the *verso* of Erasmus, but opts for *velatum* of Erasmus over the *opertum* of the Vulgate, and similarly Erasmus's *sensus* (rather than the Vulgate *mentes* which Tyndale also uses in his translation

<p><i>excaecavit Deus huius seculi, nè illucesceret illis lumen Evangelii. Caussam in alio loco explicat Paulus: [2.Thess.2] Quià non fidem adhibent (inquit) veritati, hoc est, verbo DEI, ideò mittet Deus illis efficaciam erroris, ut loco Evangelii Christi, credant mendacio hominis. Si qui putant Papam, non in hac una re potissimùm elaboravisse, tanquàm Deum huius seculi, ut mendacium humanum obscuraret Testimonium divinum: si qui alitèr dicunt, (inquam) aut proptèr ignorantiam dicunt, quod non intelligunt: aut proptèr maliciam defendunt artificio, quod probant iudicio. Pro autoritate humanae doctrinae ipsum Paulum etiam [2.Thess.2] subornant, ubi scribit: Itaque fratres state,</i></p> <p><i>[131] [Iii] & tenete institutiones quas didicistis, sivè per sermonem, sivè per epistolam nostram. Per sermonem Pauli, dicunt, multa & olim tradita Ecclesiae & ad nostra tempora reservata esse non repugnamus. Ostendant traditiones Pauli, quod Thessalonicenses facere potuerunt, & libentissimè amplexamur. Sed quid ait Primasius? [Primasius] Cùm suas vult Paulus traditiones tueri, non vult alias superaddi. Sed videamus: Nemo unquàm superaddit? Nemo hoc tentavit vivente Paulo? Audite quid idem Paulus in eòdem loco, de huiusmodi sermonibus loquitur: Ne citò (inquit) dimoveamini à mente, nequè turbemini, nequè per sermonem, nequè per epistolam, tanquàm à nobis profectam. An ausi sunt, vivente Paulo, sermonem in nomine Pauli fingere, & nunc homines nihil fingunt? An Paulus vehementissimè monet Thess. ut caverent ab illis quadruplatoribus, Anglos hodie nihil monet? An Thess. cauti & circumspecti esse debuerunt, nè aliquis sermo, tanquam à Paulo profectus, eos deciperet, & nos non debemus? Paulus duplicem doctrinam hìc nobis proponit: primum monet</i></p> <p><i>[132] Thessalonicenses, ut quem sermonem ab eo</i></p>	<p>Paul explains the cause: because (he says) ‘they don't set their faith in what is true, that is, the Word of God, (for that reason), God will send the efficacy of error to them in order that in the place of Christ's Gospel they place their trust the falsehood of man’.⁴⁴⁹ If those who think that the Pope has not taken as many pains particularly in this one matter, as if a God of this age, to conceal human falsehood as divine testimony, if those who say otherwise, (I say that) either they speak on account of ignorance what they don't understand or they defend with artifice on account of spite what they prove with (human) judgment. In defence of the authority of human doctrine they even use Paul himself in evidence when he writes⁴⁵⁰: ‘Therefore, brethren, stand fast</p> <p>and maintain the traditions which you have learnt, whether by word or through our epistle’. That through the words of Paul, (as) they say, many things were once upon a time handed down to the Church and have been preserved for our time we do not resist. Let them demonstrate the tradition of Paul, a thing the Thessalonians could do, and we embrace it most gladly. But what does Primasius say? When Paul wants to defend his own traditions, he is not willing for others to be added.⁴⁵¹ But let us see. Has no one ever added anything? Did no one attempt this when Paul was alive? Listen to what the same Paul in the same place says about wording of this kind: ‘Don't (he says) be quickly moved from your own mind or thrown into confusion, either by wording or a letter, as though it was produced by us’. Did they dare, even when Paul was alive, to fabricate wording in the name of Paul, and yet now men fabricate nothing? Does Paul very strongly warn the Thessalonians to keep out of the way of those tricksters,⁴⁵² but today warns nothing of the sort to the English? Ought the Thessalonians to have been cautious and circumspect lest some wording, as if made by Paul, delude them, but we ought not? Paul at this point places before us a two-fold doctrine:⁴⁵³ first he warns</p> <p>the Thessalonians to preserve very carefully the wording</p>
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as ‘minds’); Luther uses *sinn* which connotes both mind and senses). Ascham also prefers the Erasmian *illucesceret* over the Vulgate's *fulgeat*.

⁴⁴⁹ 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11. Ascham is paraphrasing rather than quoting here.

⁴⁵⁰ 2 Thessalonians 2:15. His wording follows precisely that of the Vulgate and Erasmus.

⁴⁵¹ Primasius, *Commentary on St Paul's Epistles*. This is a reference to the notion of Apostolical tradition as suggested by Paul in: 1 Corinthians 11:2 and 2 Thessalonians 2:15 which Ascham has just quoted.

⁴⁵² *quadruplator* can literally mean one who multiplies by four, or an informer, so called because they received a fourth part of the thing informed against, or alternatively informed against someone who had committed an offence punishable with a fourfold penalty. It also comes to mean ‘a trickster’.

⁴⁵³ Ascham uses the start of 2 Thessalonians 2 in what follows.

accepissent, diligentissimè custodirent: deindè, quoniàm in spiritu videbat Paulus, fore in postremis temporibus certos homines, quales nunc multi sunt, qui nomine sermonis Pauli, humanas nugae venditarent, monet, ut caveamus ab huiusmodi hominibus, dicens: Nè turbemini, nequè per sermonem, nequè per Epistolam, tanquàm à nobis profectam. Itaque, nè aegrè ferant homines, si nos potiùs suspiciosi cum Paulo, quàm creduli cum illis, omnem sermonem circumforaneum & ἀδὲσποτον (adespoton), in nullo numero habeamus. Et cùm nihil obscurius, incertius, & fallacius esse potest, quàm opinio humana: sunt certè illi iniquissimi homines, qui sacerdotium externum, cum sacrificio sacerdotali, mundo, vel potiùs Ecclesiae Christi, obtrudere volunt, cùm nihil, praetèr opinionem humanam, & meras tenebras, pro ea re adferre possunt: si possunt, relinquunt humanam doctrinam, & committant sacerdotium suum sacrae scripturae, quae perfectissimè docet, redarguit, & corrigit omnia [2.Tim.3]. Sin verò a Christo ad hominem

[133] [I iii] abducere indicium de sacerdotio suo volunt, ostendunt quid sunt, & quem Deum sequuntur, qui coniiciunt se in tenebras, & aspernantur lucem: consistentes in arena, vacillantes in petra: rectissimam viam deferentes, semitam erroris persequentes: panem vivum contemnentes, palea humana se refertientes: & quòd apte dicit quidam, inventis frugibus, glande vescentes. Atquè ut concludamus totum hunc locum, si Christum iudicem agnoscunt, doctrinam Christi proferant: sin Papam, humana doctrina humanum suum sacerdotium defendant.

Itaque, cùm in scriptura nullum extet vestigium, vel sacerdotii externi, vel sacrificii Missae, pro vivis & mortuis applicandi: cùm certa natio hominum sit, qui scripturas contemnunt, nisi Doctorum sententias audiunt: ut si ad manifestas scripturas confirmandas,

which they had received from him; secondly, since Paul was seeing in the spirit that there would be in later times certain men, the type of whom there are now many, who would, using the name of Paul's wording, try to peddle human trifles, he advises us to keep away from men of that kind, saying: 'Don't be thrown into confusion either by word or a letter, as though it was produced by us'.⁴⁵⁴ And so, men should not take it badly if we, mistrustful along with Paul rather than being ready to believe with those men, consider every anonymous⁴⁵⁵ piece of wording spoken at the market⁴⁵⁶ of no account. This is especially (the case) when nothing can be more obscure, more uncertain and more fallacious than human opinion. Certainly, there are those very spiteful men who want to foist upon the world – or rather onto the Church of Christ - the external priesthood with its priestly sacrifice when they are able to bring forth nothing except human opinion, and mere shadows instead of the real thing. If they can, they should put aside human doctrine and commit their priesthood to holy Scripture which instructs most perfectly, refutes and corrects everything.⁴⁵⁷ But if indeed

they wish to lead the proof about their priesthood away from Christ to man, they demonstrate what they are and which God they follow, (namely) men who cast themselves into shadows and spurn the light, stuck in the sand and tottering on a rock; rejecting the most upright way and following the by-way of error, despising the living bread, stuffing themselves with human chaff, and, what someone aptly says, a harvest having been discovered, they feed on an acorn.⁴⁵⁸ And just to conclude this entire argument, if they recognize Christ as judge, they bring forth the doctrine of Christ, but if (they recognise) the Pope, they defend their human priesthood with human doctrine.

And so, since in Scripture there exists no trace either of an external priesthood or of the sacrifice of the Mass to be applied for the living and the dead; since there is a certain tribe of men who condemn the Scriptures unless

⁴⁵⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:2. Ascham followed the wording of Erasmus rather than the Vulgate which has *neque terremini* in place of the Vulgate's *turbemini* and *missam* in place of the Vulgate *profectam*.

⁴⁵⁵ This Greek word literally means 'without a master' and of writings comes to mean 'anonymous'.

⁴⁵⁶ *circumforaneum* is a striking adjective used by Cicero in *Letters to Atticus* and *pro Cluentio*.

⁴⁵⁷ 2 Timothy 3:16. Ascham's classical wording diverges significantly from the Erasmus and the Vulgate which have (respectively): *utilis ad doctrinam, ad redargutionem, ad correctionem, ad institutionem* and *utilis est ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corripiendum, ad erudiendum*. It is interesting that Ascham retained, as the Vulgate does, the verb *doceo* than Erasmus did. Luther's word *lehre* contains the sense of both 'doctrine' and 'teaching'. Tyndale wrote 'proffitable to teache...'.
⁴⁵⁸ A phrase borrowed from Cicero who in *Orator ad Brutum* (9.31) wrote: *Quae est autem in hominibus tanta perversitas, ut inventis frugibus glande vescantur?*

non adhibeatur etiam Doctoris autoritas, maluerint universas scripturas perversa sua interpretatione corrumpere, quàm suam perversam opinionem relinquere: proferam iam sententias clarissimorum Doctorum in medium

[134] *ut infirmitati talium hominum satisfaciamus (cùm revera non infirmi, sed perversi existant:) & ut summo consensu, & scripturarum & Doctorum, hoc evidentissimum esse comprobemus. Primùm, quòd Christus non offertur in caena, ut sacerdotes volunt [Christus non offertur sed renunciatur in Caena]: sed oblatum semel, olim in cruce, nunc renunciatur in caena, ut omnes Doctores docent: Deindè, quòd tale sacrificium, non magis ad sacerdotium, quàm ad quemvis alium Laicum pertineat. Nam si Christus, non revera in caena sacrificatur, sed sacrificatus tantummodò commemoratur, unde nomen huius sacrificii ortum est? Profectò, cùm omnes Christiani, aequo iure, in caena commemorare debent: omnes Christiani, aequo iure, in caena sacrificare solent. Itaque, aut commemoratio passionis Christi non est omnium Christianorum, quod impium est dicere: aut hoc sacrificium non est tantummodò sacerdotum, quod verissimum est asserere: omnes enim commemorant, omnes igitur sacrificant. Et haec ratio tam perspicua est, ut nisi Papa, Deus huius nostri seculi [Papa Deus seculi], occaecasset mentes eorum, veritatem lucis & Christi aperto ore agnoscerent:*

[135] *[I iiii] non opinionem noctis & hominis falso artificio defenderent. Sed haec fusiùs postea.*

Offerre, apud Patres, significat oblatum celebrare [Offerre quid apud patres significat.], & memoria renovare. Sic Christus dicitur offerri in caena: non quòd revera immolatur, sed quia eius passio plenissimè peracta in cruce, in memoriam hominum, per mysterium caenae, revocatur. [Hebr.9.] Nam si revera Christus offertur, revera Christus moritur: si enim iterum offerretur, ut planissimè docet Paulus,

they hear the judgements of the Doctors with the result that even if the authority of a Doctor may not be applied in the corroboration of the plain meaning of Scripture, they prefer to spoil Scripture as a whole with their wayward interpretation rather than abandon their own wayward opinion. I will now bring forward into the mix the judgements of very distinguished Doctors

so that we might satisfy⁴⁵⁹ the weakness of such men (when really it's that they are not so much weak as perverse) and, so that with the utmost agreement of both Scripture and the Doctors, we can verify that this is altogether true. Firstly, (is the fact) that Christ is not sacrificed in the Supper, as the priests wish,⁴⁶⁰ but having been sacrificed just once, once upon a time on the cross, is now recalled in the Supper, as all the Doctors teach. Secondly, (is the fact) that a sacrifice of such a kind should not pertain more to the priesthood than it does to another laymen whoever he may be. For if Christ is not actually sacrificed in the Supper, but having already been sacrificed is only commemorated, from where has the name of this sacrifice arisen? Certainly, when all Christians with equal right ought to commemorate (him) in the Supper, all Christians with equal right are accustomed to sacrifice in the Supper. Therefore, either the remembrance of Christ's passion is not common to all Christians, which is a wicked thing to say, or this sacrifice is not the sole preserve of the priests, which is very true to declare. Everyone commemorates, thus everyone sacrifices. And this reasoning is so evident that if the Pope, the 'God' of this age of ours,⁴⁶¹ had not stopped-up their minds, they would acknowledge with gusto the truth of light and Christ

and they would not uphold the opinion of the night and of man with false pretence. But more on this in due course.

'To sacrifice', according to the Fathers, signifies an honouring of what has been offered and a renewal through remembrance.⁴⁶² Thus, Christ can be said to be sacrificed in the Supper; not that he is really sacrificed but, because his passion was fully completed on the cross, he is recalled into the remembrance of men

⁴⁵⁹ *satisfacio* could here mean 'indulge' or 'make amends for'.

⁴⁶⁰ The margin note here reads: 'Christ is not sacrificed but recalled in the Supper'.

⁴⁶¹ The margin note here refers to 'the Pope, the God of this world.'

⁴⁶² The margin note translates as 'To sacrifice' – what it signifies among the Fathers'.

<p>[Rom.6] <i>necesse haberet, ut iterùm moreretur: at Christus qui resurrexit à mortuis, ultrà non moritur: ultrà igitur non offertur: non offertur (inquam) in oblatione vera, quae semel peracta est: sed in recordatione grata, quae saepè renovata est. Itaque quotiès veteres doctores sacrificium Christi in caena nominaverunt, hoc κατά μετωνυμίαν (kata metōnumian), & inversionem quandam nominis dicere consueverunt, qui mos loquendi in multis aliis rebus quoque percrebrescit: ut cum dicimus de festo Natalis Domini, Christus hodiè natus est, non quòd reverà hodiè nascitur, sed quòd a pio populo natus renunciatur: sic Christus offerri dicitur in caena, non quòd ullo modo</i></p>	<p>through the sacrament of the Supper. For if Christ is really sacrificed, Christ really dies.⁴⁶³ Indeed, if he is sacrificed again, it follows necessarily, as Paul very clearly teaches, that he would die again.⁴⁶⁴ But Christ, who rose from the dead, doesn't die beyond that and so he's not sacrificed beyond that. He is not sacrificed (I say) in a true offering which has already been performed once but in grateful remembrance, which is often renewed. Therefore, whenever the ancient Doctors have referred to the sacrifice of Christ in the Supper, they have been accustomed to say this by way of metonymy and as a certain allegory of the term; and this way of speaking is prevalent in many other matters too. For instance, when we talk about the festival of the Birth of our Lord - Christ was born today - not that he is really born today, but that his birth is recalled by pious people. Hence, Christ is said to be sacrificed in the Supper, not because</p>
<p>[136] <i>immolatur per sacerdotem patri, ut nonnulli impiè de suo cerebro fingunt: sed quia ab omnibus ritè summentibus, Christus mortuus pro nobis, efficacissimè commemoratur. Praeterea, haec ipsa dies, in qua nos ista iam scribimus, Circumcisio Domini nominatur, tamen in toto hoc celeberrimo Collegio Divi Ioannis, nemo tam ignarus rerum puer est, qui putat hodie Christum circumcidi: sed Christum olim circumcisum, hodierna celebritate coli: sic, qui Christum in caena, tanquam veram hostiam, se Patri immolare dicunt, & non memoriam solummodò Christi semel immolati referunt, non solum haereticae impietatis crimen suscipiunt, sed puerilis inscitiae notam sibi meritò inurunt. In die Paschatis & Ascensionis, iucundissima voce canimus, Christus hodiè resurrexit, Christus hodie ascendit, cum revera hac die non resurrexit ab inferis, neque hac die ascendit in coelos, sed memoriam resurrectionis & ascensionis Christi, hac nominis notatione dignam esse iudicamus. Eòdem modo, vetus testamentum Moses dicitur à Paulo, ut [2.Cor.3]: Velamen adhuc est super</i></p>	<p>he is sacrificed to his Father in any way through a priest, as several men wickedly suppose according to their own understanding, but because Christ, having died for us, is commemorated most effectively by all of those using it⁴⁶⁵ properly. Besides, this day itself on which we now write these things is called the 'Circumcision of the Lord'⁴⁶⁶; however, in the whole of this very august college of St John, no boy is so ignorant about these matters as to think that on this day Christ <u>is</u> [<i>my emphasis</i>] circumcised, but (rather) that Christ, who was only circumcised once, is honoured by today's celebration. Thus, those who say that they sacrifice Christ, just like a real sacrificial victim, to his Father in the Supper and don't just recall the memory of Christ who was only sacrificed once, not only undertake a crime of the order of a heretic's wickedness, but brand themselves with a mark of boyish ignorance, and justly. On the day of the Passover and the Ascension, we sing with a most pleasing voice 'Christ has risen again today, Christ rises up today', when in actual fact on this day he hasn't really risen again from the dead, nor on this day has he risen up into the heavens, but we deem that the memory of Christ's resurrection and ascension are</p>

⁴⁶³ Ascham is thinking of Hebrew 9:16, though the actual wording of the verse refers to a testament and a testator: 'For where as is a Testament, there must also (of necessity) be the death of him that maketh the Testament' (as per the Great Bible).

⁴⁶⁴ A natural inference from Romans 6:9 which reads 'knowynge that Christe beyng raised from death dyeth no more. Death hath no more power over hym' (as per the Great Bible).

⁴⁶⁵ ie. the sacrament.

⁴⁶⁶ The Circumcision of Jesus is an event recorded in Luke's Gospel (2:21) which states that Jesus was circumcised eight days after his birth (traditionally January 1).

<p>[137] <i>[I v] oculos eorum, cùm legitur Moses: & agnus in caena comestus, Transitus vocatur, non veritate rei, sed significatione nominis: id quod de sacrificio in caena omnes veteres Doctores intelligunt, ut D. Augustinus [Augustinus.], augustissimus ille Doctor Ecclesiae Iesu Christi, Vocatur (inquit) immolatio, quae sacerdotis manibus fit, passio Christi, mors Christi, crucifixio Christi, non rei veritate, sed significante mysterio: & in alio loco, Offertur hostia in sacramento, hoc est, (inquit Augustinus) hostia semel oblata, & caesa pro nobis, celebratur et annuntiatur. Itaque, si sacerdotes nostri, quia Augustinus vocat sacrificium in caena, propterea dicunt se reverà Christum sacrificare, quod omnes sacerdotes dicunt: ergò, quia passio Christi eodem modo ab eodem Augustino dicitur, & Christum revera crucifigunt: & quia redemptio dicitur, sanguinem eius reverà fundunt: & quia mors, Christum etiam reverà occidunt: profectò, aut reverà non sacrificant, aut haec omnia revera perpetrant, cùm non vocatur alio modo sacrificium, quàm quo passio, redemptio, & mors</i></p> <p>[138] <i>nominatur. Si alio modo in caena est sacrificium Christi, quàm mors Christi, refutent Augustinum: aut qua ratione vocari volunt sacrifici, eadem ipsa ratione non dedignentur vocari homicidae: aut probent sacrificium, non mortem Christi, in caena celebrari: aut aliter sacrificium, aliter mortem, ab Augustino nuncupari. Chrysostomus [Chrysostomus.] quoque super epistolam ad Hebraeos, Non-ne per singulos dies offerimus? Offerimus quidem, sed ad recordationem facientes mortis eius.</i></p>	<p>justifiably designated with this name. In the same way, Moses of the Old Testament is referred to by Paul as follows:⁴⁶⁷ ‘Still now a veil lies over</p> <p>their eyes, when Moses is read’. And the consumption of the lamb in the Supper is called a ‘Passing’: not because that’s really what happens, but because of the signification of the term. That is what all the ancient Doctors understand about the sacrifice in the Supper, as St. Augustine, that most venerable Doctor of the Church of Jesus Christ says;⁴⁶⁸ (namely) that the sacrifice which is conferred into the hands of a priest is called the passion of Christ, the death of Christ, the crucifixion of Christ, not because that’s really what happens but for signifying a mystery. And in another place, a victim is sacrificed in the sacrament, that is (according to Augustine), a victim having been sacrificed once and killed for us, is celebrated and proclaimed. And so, if our priests, because Augustine calls it a sacrifice in the Supper, for that reason say that they actually sacrifice Christ, something that all priests say, accordingly, because the passion of Christ is spoken of in the same way by this same Augustine, they really do crucify him.⁴⁶⁹ And because ‘redemption’ is spoken of, they really do shed his blood, and because death is referred to, they really do even kill Christ, without a doubt, either they don’t really sacrifice or they really do all these things when the sacrifice is not referred to in any way other by the terms ‘the passion’, ‘redemption’ and ‘death’.</p> <p>If a sacrifice of Christ is effected in the Supper by means of another way than the death of Christ, let them refute Augustine. Either, for the very reason they want to be called sacrificers, for that same reason they should not refuse to be called murderers, or they should prove that it is the sacrifice, not the death of Christ, being celebrated in the Supper, or that the sacrifice is named in one way and death in another by Augustine. Chrysostom also (wrote) with regard to the letter to the Hebrews ‘Surely we sacrifice on single days?’⁴⁷⁰ Indeed we sacrifice, but (we) do this to commemorate his death.</p>
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⁴⁶⁷ 2 Corinthians 3:15. Ascham’s Latin diverges from the Vulgate and Erasmus. He also uses ‘eyes’ rather than ‘heart’. This deviation has no obvious precedent - the Greek New Testament also uses ‘heart, as do Tyndale and Luther.

⁴⁶⁸ Augustine did not leave an extended treatise on the Eucharist, so his understanding of it and, more especially, the Mass sacrifice, must be gleaned from his sermons, letters and other works (as per Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages*, p.330). The key texts are *City of God*, chapter 10, his *Tractates on the Gospel of John* and letters such as (54 and 55) to Januarius (to which he has already referred to above).

⁴⁶⁹ I have broken up Ascham’s very long sentence.

⁴⁷⁰ Chrysostom, Homily 17 on Hebrews 10:2-9.

<p><i>Et in alio loco insignitè posuit Chrysostomus, loquens de dicto Pauli, Christus semèl oblatus est, ait: CHRISTUS seipsum obtulit, & praetèr hunc nemo illum immolâre potest. At quid ait Chrysostomus? Nemo Christum, praetèr Christum, immolâre potest. Ubì ergo distinctio est nostrorum sacerdotum, qui asserunt Christum semèl per se, saepissime autem per sacerdotes offerri Patri? Si nemo immolâre eum potest, quomodò saepissimè ab universis sacerdotibus immolator? Immolâre eum nemo potest, inquit Chrysostomus, quia nemo illum occidere potest. Sacerdotes nostri</i></p> <p><i>[139] coacti sunt confitèri haec vera esse, tamen aliquid addunt de suo, & novum modum immolandi Christum confingunt: quem modum, ut soli vendicant sacerdotes citrà omnem scripturam: ità soli excogitant sacerdotes, citrà omnem rationem. Nam quòd veteres Patres toties inculcant, Christum oblatum esse in sacramento, verissimum esse confitemur: Patres enim sacrificium intelligunt, non sacerdotum, sed totius Ecclesiae Dei, totius corporis Christi. Itaque, aut soli sacerdotes sunt corpus Christi & Ecclesia DEI, aut soli sacerdotes non offerunt sacrificium in sacramento, sed reliqui etiam homines, qui sunt de corpore & Ecclesia CHRISTI, quod [De Civi.Dei.10.20] Augustinus planissimis verbis ostendit, ubi ait, Ipse per ipsam suetus est offerri, hoc est, CHRISTUS per Ecclesiam: igitur (quod etiam atque etiam dicimus) soli sacerdotes sunt Ecclesia, aut soli sacerdotes non offerunt: quod verissimum est, testante ipso Canone Missae: testante vetustissimo authore Irenaeo, qui dicit [Irenaeus.] Populum offerre: testante etiam</i></p> <p><i>[140] communi consensu vetustissimorum Doctorum: id quod nos fusiùs alio loco demonstrabimus. Sacrificii Christi in cruce plenissimè peracti commemoratio, in caena, à toto populo communicante celebratur: novus autem modus verè sacrificandi Christum per solos</i></p>	<p>And in another place, Chrysostom notably stated, speaking about something said by Paul, that Christ was sacrificed once; he says: ‘Christ sacrificed himself and, apart from this, no one is able to sacrifice him’.⁴⁷¹ But what does Chrysostom say? (That) No one is able to sacrifice Christ except Christ. Therefore, where is the point of departure of our priests who claim that Christ is offered just once through himself, but at the hands of priests is very often offered? If no one is able to sacrifice him, how is he sacrificed very often by all the priests? As Chrysostom says, no one is able to sacrifice him, because no one is able to kill him. Our priests</p> <p>are compelled to admit that these things are true; however, they add something of their own and devise a new way of sacrificing Christ. And just as priests alone lay claim to this (new) way without regard to the whole of Scripture, so priests alone contrive (this) without regard to all reason. For what the old Fathers so often emphasise - that Christ was sacrificed in the sacrament - we acknowledge as very true. For the Fathers understand the sacrifice (as) not (being that) of the priests but of the whole of the Church of God, of the whole body of Christ. And so, either our priests alone constitute the body of Christ and the Church of God or the priests alone don’t offer a sacrifice in the sacrament but also the rest of men who are from the body and the Church of Christ, a point which Augustine demonstrates in no uncertain terms when he states that: ‘He himself is wont to be sacrificed through it itself’,⁴⁷² that is, Christ through the Church. Therefore, (something we keep saying over and over again) priests alone constitute the Church, or the priests are not the only ones to sacrifice.⁴⁷³ That this is very true is testified by the Canon of the Mass itself and by the very ancient author, Irenaeus, who says that the people sacrifice.⁴⁷⁴ It’s also testified to</p> <p>through common agreement of the oldest Doctors; and we will demonstrate this at greater length in another place. The remembrance of the completely perfected sacrifice of Christ on the cross is celebrated in the Supper by the whole of the people in common. However, a new way of sacrificing Christ is being</p>
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⁴⁷¹ Chrysostom, Homily 17 on Hebrews 9:28.

⁴⁷² Augustine’s *City of God*, book 10, chapter 20. Here Augustine clarifies the role of Jesus as offeror and the sacrifice itself in the sacrament. Ascham does not quote Augustine verbatim (*quae cum ipsius capitis corpus sit, se ipsam per ipsum discit offerre*), but the thrust of what Ascham says is accurate enough.

⁴⁷³ Note the syllogistic method being used here.

⁴⁷⁴ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 4, chapter 18, where he refers throughout to people making sacrifices.

sacerdotes, ab humano cerebro excogitatur. nam commemoratio sacrificii verum sacrificium non existit, quod Lyranus super epistolam ad Hebraeos [Lyranus] planissime docet, dicens: Eucharistiae sacramentum non oblationem sed memoriale esse oblationis Christi: nec verè sacrificium, sed memoriam sacrificii continere. Itaque, cum omnes celebrant eodem modo memoriam sacrificii Christi in caena, quod nemo negare audeat: omnes similiter eodem iure sacrificant, quod nemo dubitare debet. [Lib.4.Dist.12] Petrus etiam Lombardus Magister sententiarum, (proferimus eos autores quorum autoritas maxima est apud nostros sacerdotes:) apertis verbis idem ostendit, dicens: Illud quod offertur & consecratur à sacerdote, ideò (inquit) vocari sacrificium & oblationem, quia memoria sit & repraesentio veri sacrificii, & sanctae

[141] immolationis factae in ara crucis. Desinant ergò Missarii iactare, opus suum esse verum sacrificium, contra tam apertas tantorum Doctorum auctoritates. Et vanissimum est quod in vulgus dispergunt, novos homines, quos vocant, non audire veteres Doctores: cum illi potissimum, qui catholici & sacrifici dici volunt, Doctores pro arbitrato suo reiiciunt. Doctores enim celebrationem Eucharistiae sacrificium vocant, non quia verum sacrificium existit, sed quia veri sacrificii memoriam usque ad novissimum Christi adventum fidelissimè transmittit. Et considera diligenter omnes partes caenae, & facile intelliges, quòd manducare corpus, & bibere sanguinem Domini, non sit sacrificium: cum reliqua omnia, quae adiuncta sunt huic manducationi, verissima sacrificia existant. Primum, vitae transactae paenitentia, mentis delectio, preces, fiducia, gratiarum actio, & novi hominis renovatio sacrificia sunt, quae ab omnibus Christianis semper quidem, sed praecipuè in caena, Deo offerri debent. Cum accedimus ad esum, vide, tum potissimum recipimus à Deo, verius quàm offerrimus

devised from human understanding by priests alone. For the remembrance of a sacrifice does not count as an actual sacrifice, a point Nicholas of Lyra teaches most clearly respecting the letter to the Hebrews, saying that the sacrament of the Eucharist is not an offering of Christ but a memorial to his offering and nor indeed does it comprise a sacrifice but the remembrance of his sacrifice.⁴⁷⁵ And thus, when everyone celebrates the memory of the sacrifice of Christ in the Supper in the same way, something no one dares to deny, everyone similarly sacrifices with the same right, something no one ought to doubt. Even Peter Lombard, the Teacher of Sentences, (and we bring forth those authors whose authority is esteemed the highest among our priests) with clear words shows the same,⁴⁷⁶ saying that that which is sacrificed and consecrated by a priest is (he says) called a sacrifice and an offering for the reason that they constitute the memory and representation of the true sacrifice and the sacred

offering made on the altar of the cross. And so, the supporters of the Mass should cease from spreading it around that their own act is the true sacrifice in contradiction with such clear authority of such great Doctors. And it's very a deceptive thing to scatter abroad among the common people that 'new men', as they refer to them, don't hear the old Doctors, when it's precisely those men who wish to be spoken of as Catholics and sacrificers, who reject the Doctors in place of their own judgement. For the Doctors call the celebration of the Eucharist a sacrifice, not because it's really a sacrifice, but because it very faithfully conveys a memorial of the true sacrifice right up to most recent coming of Christ. And consider carefully all aspects of the Supper and you'll quickly understand that to eat the body and to drink the body of the Lord does not amount to a sacrifice, whereas everything else which has been associated with this act of eating really are true sacrifices. Firstly, repentance of the life we have led, a purging of the mind, prayers, faith, the act of giving thanks and the renewal of a 'new man' are sacrifices which indeed ought always to be offered to God by all Christians, but especially in the Supper. When we come to eat, see, it's then especially that we receive from God

⁴⁷⁵ Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla super Totam Bibliam*.

⁴⁷⁶ Lombard's *Sentences*, Book IV, Distinction 12 (On the Eucharist). In Distinction 12, chapter 5 (70), note 1, Lombard writes: '...what is offered and consecrated by the priest is called sacrifice and oblation because it is a remembrance and representation of the true sacrifice and the holy immolation made on the altar of the cross. And indeed Christ died only once...but he is daily immolated in the sacrament because in the sacrament is made a remembrance of what was done once' (as per *Peter Lombard Sentences*, trans. Silano).

<p>[142] <i>Deo: recipimus corpus Christi, recipimus sanguinem Christi, recipimus dona coelistia, non retribuimus humana munera: & propterea, tota illa res vocatur sacramentum, hoc est, sacrum mysterium, quo Deus se, cum donis suis, verè & gratiose nobis exhibet: nos contrà, Deum in domicilium cordis nostri recipimus, cum grata recordatione passionis eius. Quam passionis recordationem, corporis & sanguinis Domini perceptione celebratam, cum tot sequuntur, vel potius circumstant sacrificia, nempe humilitatis, iusticiae, laudis, gratiarum actionis, & obedientiae, clarissime liquet, quòd caena, quia tot ornata sacrificiis existat, nomen quoque sacrificii apud veteres induat. Nos igitur cum scriptura, cum Augustino, Chrysostomo, Lyrano, & Lombardo dicimus, In caena non Christum verè a solis sacerdotibus sacrificari, sed gratè ac salutaritèr ab universa Ecclesia commemorari. Atque si Catholici nostri ullam rationem haberent, quid Scripturae doceant, quid Doctores sentiant, non verum sacrificium sibi solis in Missa arrogarent: sed veram & salutarem</i></p> <p>[143] <i>participationem corporis & sanguinis Domini, unà cum hiis qui eodem sanguine redempti sunt, libentèr in caena communicarent. Pighius, Coryphaeus Romanae religionis [Pighius Romanae religionis Coryphaeus.], quem sacerdotes summum authorem habent, locum Malachiae invita scriptura, negantibus vetustissimis Patribus, ad sacrificium Missariorum traducit. Propterea propheta sic loquitur: [Mala.1.] In omni loco sacrificatur, & offertur nomini meo oblatio munda, quia magnum est nomen meum in gentibus, dicit Dominus exercituum. Ex hoc loco intelligite impudentiam Pighii, obtorto collo rapit Scripturam, quò libido eius fert, ut suam sententiam inculcet: contemnit sententias in hoc loco doctissimorum Patrum, contemnit Tertulianum</i></p>	<p>more truly than we offer</p> <p>to God. We receive the body of Christ, we receive the blood of Christ, we receive heavenly gifts, we don't reciprocate with temporal gifts. And, for this reason, that entire activity is called a sacrament, that is, a sacred mystery, through which God with his own gifts truly and graciously shows himself to us. We, on the contrary, receive God into the dwelling place of our own heart through thankful remembrance of his passion. When so many follow this remembrance of the passion celebrated by the comprehension of the Lord's body and blood, or rather they occupy⁴⁷⁷ sacrifices of course (those) of humility, of justification, of praise, of the act of giving thanks and of obedience, it is very clear that the Supper, because it exists decked out with so many sacrifices, also assumes the name of a sacrifice as it did with the old (Doctors). We therefore speak with Scripture, with Augustine, Chrysostom, Nicholas of Lyra, Lombard, that in the Supper Christ is not actually sacrificed by the priests alone, but commemorated with thanks and beneficially by the universal Church. And if our Catholics hold what the Scriptures teach and what the Doctors think in any account, they shouldn't appropriate for themselves alone the true sacrifice in the Mass. But in the Supper</p> <p>they should willingly have in common the true and beneficial sharing of the body and the blood of the Lord, together with those who have been redeemed by the same blood.</p> <p>Pighius,⁴⁷⁸ the Coryphaeus⁴⁷⁹ of the Roman religion, whom the priests have as their ultimate author, applies a point of Malachi to the sacrifice of the Masses, despite the fact that Scripture is reluctant and the most ancient Fathers deny it. On that account, the prophet⁴⁸⁰ speaks in this way: 'In every place a cleansing offering is performed and offered unto my name for my name is great among people says the Lord of hosts'.⁴⁸¹ From this, understand the impudence of Pighius – he seizes Scripture violently by the throat⁴⁸² - to where his licence carries him with the result that he rams home his own</p>
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⁴⁷⁷ This verb can be transitive or intransitive, but I have made 'they' the subject and *sacrificia* the object.

⁴⁷⁸ Albert Pighius, A sixteenth century Roman Catholic theologian (see chapter 3 of thesis).

⁴⁷⁹ The Coryphaeus or κορυφαῖος (coryphaeus) was the leader of the chorus in Attic drama; he spoke for the others and so came to mean the chief of any sect. Cicero called Zeno the 'Coryphaeus of the Stoics' in *de Deorum Natura* 1.21.59.

⁴⁸⁰ The errata add this word *propheta*.

⁴⁸¹ Malachi 1:11. The meaning of this reference to a sacrifice and pure offering has been debated extensively during the history of the Catholic Church.

⁴⁸² Note Cicero uses *collo obtorto* in *pro Cluentio* 21.59.

<p>[Tertul.lib.4.contra Mar.], <i>qui contra Marcionem exponens hunc Malachiae locum, vocat mundam oblationem simplicem orationem, & puram conscientiam, quae duae res, vel invito Pigio, ipsissima sacrificia novi testamenti existunt, ut Augustinus multis in locis expressis verbis docet, nempe epistola ad Honoratum, Sacrificia novi testamenti esse, quibus offerimus Deo laudes & gratiarum actiones. Et sermone de tempore</i> 255.perspicuè</p>	<p>opinion. On this point, he scorns the opinions of the most learned of the Fathers, he scorns Tertullian who, when he is writing against Marcion, explains this part of Malachi and calls the cleansing offering a simple prayer and a pure conscience.⁴⁸³ And these two things themselves exist as the sacrifices themselves of the New Testament (even though Pighius is reluctant), as Augustine teaches in many places with express words and certainly the letter to Honoratus (states) that the sacrifices of the New Testament are those with which we offer praises and gestures of thanks to God.⁴⁸⁴ And in a sermon about Time (number 255)⁴⁸⁵, it clearly</p>
<p>[144] <i>etiam posuit in veteris & novi testamenti Quaest.69. ostendens sacrificia novi testamenti esse, quae fiunt anima, invisibiliter animo & spiritu. Contemnit etiam Pighius Hieronymum, qui exponens Malachiam, mundas oblationes intelligit sanctorum hominum preces. Pighius in hoc uno loco impetum facit in omnem scripturam, & universos Patres, qui hanc Malachiae sententiam unquam explicaverunt. Et vide, quanto artificio utitur ad refutandam auctoritatem Scripturae, & convellendam sententiam veteris Ecclesiae. Pighius interrogat seipsum, Quenam sit illa oblatio munda? Adverte intollerantiam hominis, quomodo tollit omnes oblationes, ut oblationem sacerdotalem constituat. Primùm reiicit Christi oblationem in cruce, affirmans [Impudentia Pighii] (maiori nè impudentia, an blasphemia incertum est,) eam oblationem, non in omnes orbis ditiones peragrasse, sed in una Iudaea constituisse. Opponimus Pigio sanctum Hieronymum [Hieron in Ezech.21.], qui eodem modo interrogat seipsum, Quenam sit illa oblatio munda, de qua Malachias loquitur? Ipse respondit: Quae completa est</i></p>	<p>rested on the <i>Quaestiones</i> of the Old and New Testament, number 69⁴⁸⁶ demonstrating that the sacrifices of the New Testament which become life are invisible to the mind and spirit.⁴⁸⁷ Pighius even rejects Jerome who, explaining Malachi, interprets the cleansing offerings as prayers of saints.⁴⁸⁸ Pighius in this one place makes an attack against all Scripture and all the Fathers who have ever explained this precept of Malachi. And behold what artifice he uses to refute the authority of Scripture and for wrenching this precept of the old Church. Pighius asks himself what precisely is that cleansing offering? Notice the impatience of the man and how he rejects all offerings in order to establish a priestly offering. Firstly, he rejects the offering of Christ on the cross, affirming (and it's uncertain what's greater (here), his impudence or his blasphemy) that that offering hasn't penetrated all the world's dominions, but has come to halt in Judaea only.⁴⁸⁹ Against Pighius we place sacred Jerome who in the same way asks himself what precisely is that cleansing offering about which Malachi speaks.⁴⁹⁰ He himself replies: 'What has been fulfilled</p>
<p>[145] <i>[K] in adventum Christi, quandò venit desideratus gentibus, & ortus est sol iustitiae. Ubi sunt omnes Pighiani, qui Patres habent in ore, &</i></p>	<p>for the advent of Christ because then he, desired by the people, came and the sun of justification rose'.⁴⁹¹ Where are all the Pighians who have the Fathers in their</p>

⁴⁸³ Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, book 4; see translation in *Anti-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of The Writings of the Fathers*, eds., Rev. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (Edinburgh, 1868), vol.7, p.178.

⁴⁸⁴ Augustine, *Epistle to Honoratus* (140).

⁴⁸⁵ Augustine *Sermones de Tempore* (255 of 256).

⁴⁸⁶ A reference to question 69 of the 127 *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti* by Pseudo Augustine.

⁴⁸⁷ Augustine also made the point that our own bodies could become sacrifices and the soul itself could become an instrument of sacrifice when offered up to God (*De Civitate Dei*, book X.6).

⁴⁸⁸ Jerome, *In Malachiam prophetam*, I.

⁴⁸⁹ The margin note highlights 'the impudence of Pighius'.

⁴⁹⁰ Jerome's *Commentary on Ezekiel* chapter 21.

⁴⁹¹ Malachi 4:2, as quoted by Jerome above.

Pigium in sinu? Cûr negat Pigius, quod affirmat Hieronymus? Quis nunc contemnit Patres? Quis reiicit auctoritatem veteris Ecclesiae? Et quamquam egi iam Hieronymum, variis in locis variam sententiam referentem intulerim, ut in altero loco intelligat oblationem Malachiae esse orationem Sanctorum, in altero ipsam oblationem Christi in cruce, non tamen duplicis quasi cellae insimulo Hieronymum, qui unum locum varia ratione, sed utraque apta explicuit: sed duplicis potiùs impudentiae condemno Pigium, qui duas sententias Hieronymi reiecit, & suam novam inauditam ex suo cerebro confinxit. Et Augustinus quoque intelligit hanc puram Malachiae oblationem, fuisse sacrificium illud, per ipsum Christum impletum: ut satis impudens sit Pigius, qui potius blasphemare potentiam crucis Christi, quam doctissimorum Patrum sententiam sequi maluerit. Potentiam crucis Christi, aut iudicio tollit, aut artificio deludit, cùm ait

[146] Quòd non in omni orbis loco, sed in una Iudaea oblatio Christi oblata sit, cùm Malachias per haec verba (Sacrificatur in omni loco) significat sacrificium Christi effudisse vires suas in omnes terminos terrae, in omnem seculorum posteritatem, quod David explicat, inquires: Dabo tibi gentes [Psalm.2.] haereditatem tuam, & possessionem tuam terminos terrae. Quam possessionem non alio iure ascivit Christus, quàm oblatione corporis sui in cruce, ut in quemcunque locum terrae pertineat possessio Christi: in eundem etiam locum penetret oblatio Christi. Nec Malachias intelligit essentialem passionem Christi, quae peracta est in Iudaea, sed fructum & potentiam oblationis Christi, quae pervasit in remotissima orbis loca. Sed neque haec probâri, propter perspicuitatem: nec Pigius refutâri, proptèr apertam impietatem debet. Progreditur Pigius, & reiecta oblatione Christi cum maxima blasphemia, reiicit etiam reliqua novi testamenti sacrificia cum maiori, si fieri potest, impudentia.

Dicit Pigius hanc oblationem puram Malachiae, non esse sacrificium cordis

speech but Pighius in their heart? Why does Pighius deny what Jerome confirms? Who now scorns the Fathers? Who rejects the authority of the old Church? And although I have already mentioned Jerome, I should have presented the setting forth of his changing opinion in various places, how in one place he interprets the offering of Malachi as a speech of saints and in another place to be the very offering of Christ on the cross.⁴⁹² However, I don't charge Jerome with having two-rooms, a man who has explained one place with a different account but each is apposite. But I do rather condemn the two-fold impudence of Pighius who has rejected the two precepts of Jerome and has fashioned his own - new and unheard of - from his own head. Augustine also understands this pure offering of Malachi to have been that sacrifice, the one discharged through Christ himself.⁴⁹³ Pighius is impudent enough that he has preferred to blaspheme the power of the cross of Christ than to follow the judgment of the most learned Fathers. As for the power of the cross of Christ, either he removes it with judgement or he mocks it with artifice when he says that

the offering of Christ is performed not in every place in the world but in Judaea only, when Malachi through these words ('He is sacrificed in every place'⁴⁹⁴) signifies that the sacrifice of Christ poured forth his own strength unto all ends of the earth and for all succeeding generations, something which David explains, saying: 'I will give to you people for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for thy possession'.⁴⁹⁵ Christ did not admit this possession by a right other than by way of the offering of his own body on the cross with the result that possession of Christ extends to any part of the world and the offering of Christ may penetrate even the same place. Nor does Malachi comprehend the true nature of the passion of Christ, which was completed in Judaea, but the effect and power of the offering of Christ which has spread to the most isolated parts of the globe. But there is no need, on account of their transparency, for such things to be proven, nor, on account of his obvious wickedness, for Pighius to be refuted. Pighius proceeds and once he has rejected the offering of Christ with utmost blasphemy, he even rejects the rest of the sacrifices of the New Testament with, if this is possible,

⁴⁹² It is not clear where Jerome does this; he is usually quotes for his first view about the cleansing oblation denoting the prayers of saints.

⁴⁹³ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 18.35; *Adversus Iudaeos* 9.12.

⁴⁹⁴ Malachi 1:11.

⁴⁹⁵ Psalm 2:8.

<p>[147] [Kii] <i>contriti, non preces & orationes: Tertulianus contrà [Tertul.lib.4.contra Marc.], affirmat hanc Malachiae oblationem esse simplicem orationem, & puram conscientiam. Quid dicemus? Pigio àn Tertuliano credemus? Quid dicet Pighius ipse? Cùr deserit Tertulianum vetustissimum patrem? Pighius nihil dicturus est, nam emigravit ab hac luce: & precor Dominum, per misericordiam suam, ut manes Pigii non luant, quod manus eius scripserunt.</i></p> <p><i>At quid nunc Pigiani dicent pro Pigio suo, cùm vident illum apertum bellum indixisse Scripturae & Patribus? Locus Divi Irenaei, de nova oblatione novi Testamenti, Pigii instituto non seruit, cùm Irenaeus, non de solius sacerdotis facto, sed de universi populi DEI, & Ecclesiae Christi sacrificio loquitur: quod nos fusiùs alio in loco probabimus. Libentiùs invehor in hunc Pighium, non tàm quòd Scripturae auctoritatem repudiat, prae sententia Ecclesiae, hoc est Papaisticae sedis, ut ille ipse libentissime agnoscit, neque quod doctrinam Tertuliani, Hieronymi, Augustini, & Anselmi apertis faucibus refutat: quam quod plurimi in hac</i></p> <p>[148] <i>Academia Cantabrigiensi existant, qui Pigii doctrinam pro Oraculo habent, cùm nihil aliud sit fovère Pighium, quàm tueri Papam: nec libri Pigiani alio animo sunt à Pigio scripti, nec à plurimis sacerdotibus lecti, quàm ut Babylonica illa bestia thronum altissimi in loco sancto, invito Evangelio Christi, occuparet. Et hactenùs de sacerdotio externo, & sacrificio sacerdotali disseruimus, quem locum, alio loco & tempore, si Deus ità voluerit, fusiùs explicare poterimus: nunc ad reliquas Missae praestigias orationem convertemus.</i></p> <p>Desunt reliqua.</p>	<p>greater impudence.</p> <p>Pighius says that this pure offering of Malachi is not the sacrifice of a</p> <p>contrite heart, nor prayers and sermons. Tertullian, by contrast, affirms that this offering of Malachi is a simple use of language and good conscience.⁴⁹⁶ What will we say? Will we trust Pighius or Tertullian? What will Pighius himself say? Why does he forsake Tertullian, the oldest Father? Pighius is going to say nothing, for he has left this world.⁴⁹⁷ And I pray to the Lord, through his compassion, that the shades of Pighius don't (have to) pay for what his hands wrote.</p> <p>But what will the Pighians now say in support of their Pighius when they see that he has proclaimed open war on Scripture and the Fathers? The position of Saint Irenaeus about the new offering of the New Testament does not coincide with that set down by Pighius, since Irenaeus speaks not about the action of a priest alone, but about the sacrifice of the entire people of God and of the Church of Christ. This is a point we will demonstrate at more length in another place. I more gladly inveigh against this Pighius, not so much because he repudiates the authority of Scripture by reason of the will of the Church – that is, the hallmark of a Papist, as he himself very willingly acknowledges – nor because he openly and vocally refutes the doctrine of Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine and Anselm, than because there exist very many men</p> <p>in this Academy of Cambridge who hold the doctrine of Pighius for an oracle, when to support Pighius is nothing other than to gaze upon the Pope. The Pighian books have not been written by Pighius with any other intention, nor have they been read by very many priests with any other intention than that Babylonian beast may occupy the throne of the highest in that sacred place, a thing not admitted by the Gospel of Christ. And thus far we have discussed the external priesthood and the priestly sacrifice and that topic we will, if God so wishes, be able to explain in more length in another place at another time. Now let us direct our oration to the remaining magic of the Mass.</p> <p>The rest is missing.</p>
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⁴⁹⁶ Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, book 4, translation in *Translations of The Writings of the Fathers*, eds., Roberts and Donaldson (Edinburgh, 1868), vol.7, p.178.

⁴⁹⁷ Pighius died in 1542.

Appendix 2

Edward Grant's Dedication and Preface to Ascham's Theological Works

Apologia Doctissimi Viri Rogeri Aschami, Angli, pro caena Dominica, contra missam & eius praestigias: in Academia olim Cantabrigiensi exercitationis gratia inchoata

Cui accesserunt themata quaedam Theologica, debita disputandi ratione in Collegio D.Ioan. pronunciata.

Expositiones item antiquae, in epistolas Divi Pauli ad Titum & Philemonem, ex diversis sanctorum Patrum Graece scriptis commentariis ab Oecumenio collectae, & a R.A. Latine versae.

Excusum Londini pro Francisco Coldocko. An.1577

A Defence by a very learned man, Roger Ascham, of England - of the Lord's Supper against the Mass and its magic: begun¹ as an exercise at one time in the University of Cambridge.

Some theological exercises have been added to this, delivered on account of the duties of disputation in the College of St John.

Moreover, [included are] ancient expositions on the letters of St Paul to Titus and Philomen from diverse written commentaries of the sacred Fathers in Greek collated by Oecumenius and translated into Latin by R.A.

Published in London by Francis Coldock² in the year 1577.³

[sig.3^r] *ILLUSTRISSIMO AC NOBILISSIMO DOMINO, D.ROBERTO DUDLEIO, LECESTRIAE COMITI, BARONI DE DENBUGH, ORDINIS, TUM SANCTI GEORGII, TUM S.MICHAELIS EQUITI AVRATO, REGIAE MAIESTATI A SACRIS CONSILIIS, E QUORUM MAGISTRO, ACADEMIAE OXON. CANCELLARIO, MAXIMO LITERARUM LITERATORUMQUE PATRONO DOMINO SUO CLEMENTISSIMO.*

HAS DOCTISSIMI VIRI Rogeri Aschami lucubrationes Theologicas, nunc primùm collectas & aeditas, gratitudinis ergō, debitique officii ratione E.G. dedicat consecratque.

To the most illustrious and noble lord, Lord Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, baron of Denbigh, a knight bachelor of the order first of St George and then of St Michael, one of the sacred counsellors to her Royal Majesty of whom he is the master, the Chancellor of Oxford University, the greatest patron of letters and teachers, his own most clement lord.

E.G.⁴ dedicates and consecrates, on account of gratitude and by reason of the duty of office, these theological reflections by the most learned man, Roger Ascham, now for the first time collected and edited.

¹ I have translated *inchoata* as 'begun', but the word also connotes something that is 'incomplete'.

² Coldock (1530/31–1603) was one of the most important booksellers in London at that time.

³ This has been amended by hand to 1578.

⁴ viz. Edward Grant.

<p><i>In Symbolum Gentilitium Honoratissimi Domini, Comitis Lecestrensis.</i> [LOGO : <i>HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE</i></p> <p><i>Parrhasis an` haec est Arctos quam voluit Olympus, Et sequitur tardus rutilanti luce Bootes?</i> <i>An potius Cynosura brevi quae vertitur orbe, Tam spatio, quàm luce minor, sed certior usu?</i> [sig.4'] <i>Parrhasis haec non est, Cynosura Lecestrius ursus</i> <i>Hic dici meruit, claro nam nobilis ortu Clarus ab Arthallo, qui primus gesserat ursum, Perpetua proavûm serie, per nomina magna, Belmontes veteres, Mandudos, atque potentes Beauchampos vênit, tandem Dudleius ursus Ut siet, ut possit Cynosura Lecestria dici: Altera nam nobis Cynosura Lecestrius heros.</i> <i>At Cynosura polo splendet contermina summo. Iste micat terris, & quòd vel tradere virtus Possit, vel summi concedere splendor honoris, Culmen utrumque tenet, summo quasi cardine fulgens. Ast dux nocturna est Tyriis Cynosura carinis. Hic dux perpetuus, Cynosura Britanna Britannis. Ingeniis patefecit iter, despectaeque Musae Hoc duce colla levant, meritis & praemia sperant. Semper inocciduis stellis Cynosura refulget.</i></p>	<p>On the family insignia of the most distinguished Lord, the noble Earl of Leicester. Evil be to him who evil thinks.⁵ -[image of bear by pole in chain⁶]</p> <p>Is this the Great Bear which Olympus makes turn⁷ And which the slow Bear-keeper⁸ follows with the light growing red? Or is it the Lesser Bear (Cynosura) which is turned on a short orbit, Lesser in its path as it is in light, but more certain in its use?⁹ This is not the Great Bear, Cynosura, this bear deserves to be called Leicestrian, for noble in his distinguished birth, Famous from Arthgal¹⁰ who had first worn the bear, In an unbroken line of ancestors, through great names, The old Belmonts, Mandudes and powerful Beauchamps it came, finally so that he may be the Dudleian bear, so that¹¹ he may be called the Leicestrian Cynosura; For the Leicester hero is another Cynosura for us. But indeed Cynosura, having a common border with the uppermost pole, shines. That man shines on earth and what either his excellence can bequeath, Or the splendour of the highest honour yield, He holds the acme¹² of each, as if resplendent at the summit of the pole. But indeed the nocturnal Cynosura is a guide for Tyrian ships. This man is our perpetual leader, a British Cynosura for Britons. He opened the way to natural talents and, with him as leader, the despised Muses raise their necks and hope for rewards for deserts. Always the Cynosura shines out with its never-setting</p>
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⁵ The motto of the Order of the Garter.

⁶ The bear and the ragged staff were first used by the Beauchamp family who became earls of Warwick in 1268 as a badge or mark of identity in to addition to their own coat of arms. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, and great-great-great-great-grandson of Richard Beauchamp, is known to have used the combined device of the bear and ragged staff frequently. This crest has been used by the Earls of Warwick to the present day, but over the centuries has also come to be associated with the county.

⁷ The Latin verse is in the hexameter metre.

⁸ Bootes, the Bear-keeper.

⁹ A very similar form of wording (*quam spatio, tam luce minor*) was used by the Roman poet and astrologer, Manilius, in book 1 of his *Astronomica*.

¹⁰ Arthgal, an Earl of Warwick at the time of King Arthur.

¹¹ *siet* is alternative form of the present subjunctive of the verb *sum*, usually *sit*.

¹² *culmen* is a contracted form of *columen*.

<p><i>Semper inocciduo nosterque micabit honore, Occasumque pati nescit, nec cedere sede. Quae virtus fulcit, non occasura reclinant. Septenis stellis micat at Cynosura polaris. Septenis etiam micat hic virtutibus Heros: Iustitiâ degit iustus, Sapientia cautum Reddit, Relligio sanctum, Constantia firmum, Temperies castum, Pietas Comitasque benignum. Hinc, (praeclare Comes) spretis spes unica Musis, Granta tuus librum squallore, situque sepultum Eruit, & vobis devota mente sacravit. Quem tuus Aschamus conscripsit Apolline dextro. Aschamus nitidus, Ciceroque secundus & alter. Accipe tu laetè, sis tu Cynosura libello: Dum micat astrigero Cynosura polaris Olympo, Fulgeat haec nobis Cynosura Lecestria terris.</i></p> <p><i>BENEVOLO Lectori.</i></p> <p><i>Exercitationes illas Theologicas (Humanissime Lector) quas R. Aschamus olim & acutè excogitavit, & ornatè conscripsit, à me collectas, & tibi in prima eius Epistolarum aeditione promissas, nunc tandem, post duorum ferè annorum spacium, cùm Bibliopōlae importunitate victus, tùm Achami studiosorum precibus commotus, Typographorum fidei imprimendas tradidi. Iucundae sane sunt, eruditae, & piaae: & dignae etiam, si Apologiae caenae Dominicae extrema manus accessisset, quae a me, ad maximam Aschami laudem, studiosè commendarentur, & a te diligentèr, ad tuam magnam iucunditatem, perlegerentur. Quae, licèt in quibusdam locis mutilae & imperfectae</i></p> <p><i>sint, dignitate tamen scribentis, & orationis suavitate tam sunt praestantes, ut nec me, qui eas collegi, & nunc in apertum profero, suscepti laboris mei paeniteat: nec</i></p>	<p>stars. Always ours [ie. the Leicestrian Cynosura] will gleam with never-setting honour, He knows not the experience of setting, nor withdrawal from his seat. The things which his excellence sustains do not, about to set, sink. Whilst the Pole star Cynosura shines with seven stars, This Hero also shines with sevenfold excellence: A just man acts with justice, Wisdom makes him Cautious, Religion sacred, Constancy firm, Temperance chaste, Piety and gentleness kind. From this source, (Distinguished Comrade), our one hope for the Muses scorned, Your Grant rescued a book buried in squalor and neglect and has dedicated it to you with a devout mind. Your Ascham wrote it with Apollo's favour, splendid Ascham, a second and another Cicero, Happily receive it; may you be a Cynosura for the little book. While the Pole Star Cynosura shines in starry Olympus, May this Cynosura of Leicester flash forth for us on earth.</p> <p>TO THE DEVOTED READER</p> <p>Those Theological exercises (Most learned Reader) which Roger Ascham once upon a time both intelligently thought up and beautifully wrote down, collated by me and promised to you in the first edition of his Letters, now at last, after an interval of almost two years, whilst (on the one hand) overcome by the insistence of the Bookseller but (on the other) moved by the supplications of the learned followers of Ascham, I committed them for printing to the security of the Printers. They are very pleasing, learned and pious; and these would, had he finished¹³ his Defence of the Lord's Supper, be worthy of being zealously committed to preservation by me for the greatest praise of Ascham, and, by you, read through carefully for your great pleasure. These, though they are mutilated in certain places and incomplete,</p> <p>are nonetheless so outstanding in the merit of their composition and in the sweetness of their style, that the work I have undertaken in bringing these together and</p>
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¹³ Literally, 'had he placed a last hand on....'.

tu, qui eas recipis, despicere aut aspernari debeas. In tuam solius gratiam in lucem apparent, ut tu (candide Lector), qui aliis eius opusculis legendis distinêris, hoc etiam Aschamicarum exercitationum genus degustares, aliaquè haberes, quae nunquam antea visa sunt, eiusdem laboris et ingenii monumenta, ornata novâ formâ, convestita aliâ materiâ, quibus ipse te legendo delectares.

Instituit singula Decalogi praecepta eadem tractandi ratione percurrere, & in iis peragrandis, universas privatae Missae praestigias reserare: sed aliis forte impeditus laboribus, gravioribusquè implicatus exercitiis, à literarum otio, cui se totum tradiderat, abstractus: ab his studiorum exercitationibus, in quas se aliquot dierum spacio penitùs fixerat & abdiderat, ad Aulica (ut ego existimo) negotia, instituendamquè

D. Eliz, advocatus, huic exercitationi fastigium aut non omninò imposuit, aut impositum infoelicitèr amisit.

Habes igitur inchoatam, sed (proh dolor) non ad finem perductam eius pro caena Dominica defensionem. Quam quidè primùm nititur autoritate & exemplis Scripturae confirmare: deinde consilio & monumentis Patrum communire, & firmis corroborare rationibus, Missam hanc Mimicam & Histrionicam non esse caenam Dominicam. Postremò quò certis quibusdam hunc latissimum disputationis campum, in quo Missae scelera exprimere conatur, circumdet finibus, Decalogum sibi percurrendum proponit, quem sic per priora eius (ut vides) praecepta tractat (cetera enim desiderantur,) ut Diaboli vim & tyrannidem apertè prodat, privatae Missae fraudes, dolos, latebras, aliaquè vana eius deliramenta doctè reseret, & nebulosam illorum temporum caliginem lepidè discutiat, humanae doctrinae tenebras

fusè dispellat, inertemquè ignorantium sacerdotum turbam acritèr pungat & peramarè insectetur. Nec immerito. Missa enim non unam noctem, sed tenebras

now set forth for publication, causes me no regret and nor ought you, as you receive them, look askance upon or scorn them. For your sake alone, they come to light so that you, (well-disposed Reader¹⁴), who are engaged in reading his other little works, may also sample this type of exercise by Ascham and be in possession of other monuments of that same industry and flair which have never been seen before, decorated with new form and clothed in other material, with which you can delight yourself by reading.

He undertook to run through individual commandments of the Decalogue with the same method of investigation and in going through these, to lay open the entire magic of the private Mass. But, by chance, encumbered with other tasks and engaged in endeavours of a more serious nature, he was torn from the leisure of letters to which he had devoted his whole self. Having been called away from these exercises of studies into which he had wholly attached and taken himself in the space of several days to business of the Court (as I reckon) and the teaching

of princess Elizabeth, either he altogether failed to get to the conclusion of this exercise or, alas, he lost his conclusion.

Therefore, you have his defence of the Lord's Supper that is started, but (o misery!) not continued to the end. Indeed, in confirmation of his argument (namely that this simulated and theatrical Mass is not the same as the Lord's Supper), he firstly relied on the authority and examples of Scripture, secondly, by way of strengthening it and corroborating it with robust reasoning, on the counsel and written works of the Fathers. Finally, in order that he might surround with some certain boundaries this most extensive field for debate in which he tried to express the crimes of the Mass, he proposed that he must run through the Decalogue which he handled through his previous precepts (as you see) (for the rest are missing) so that he might openly make known the violence and tyranny of the Devil, skilfully reveal the deceptions of the private Mass, its tricks, hiding places, and its other vain absurdities, and charmingly dispel the dark mist of those times, amply drive out the shadows of human doctrine,

zealously sting the inactive crowd of ignorant priests and censure them most bitterly. And not unjustly. For the Mass has troubled, with multiple tricks, deceits,

¹⁴ Ovid addresses his reader in such a way.

multorum seculorum: nec domicilium unius hominis, sed imperium totius orbis, multiplicibus fraudibus, imposturis, fascinationibus latrociniisque infestavit. Nec viles, simplices & imperitos solùm, sed potentes quosque & astutos, fefellit, fascinavit, expilavit. Et quid non? Nam quotusquisque unquàm fuit, tam rapax bellator, tam tenax mercator, tam versutus foeneratorus, tam avarus senex, tam restricta anus, etiamsi probe noverunt alios homines spoliare, fallere, & expilare, quin hos omnes Missa spoliaverit, deceperit, & expilaverit. Et quid ita? Quia nulla unquàm extitit tam proiecta libido, tam eminens scelerum vis, quae in Missae sanctimonia securum & certum Asylum non habuerit. Sed quid plura? R. Aschamus satis ample Missae huius ineptias, fucos, fraudes, tenebras, & deliramenta persequitur, fusiùs pertractaturus,

si hanc tractatiunculam perfecisset. Habes quae sunt inventa & conservata, reliqua quae desiderantur, potius dolenda quàm speranda sunt. Alias exercitationes, quas ille partim se exercendi gratia, partim debito disputandi officio vel privatim in cubiculo conscripsit, vel publicè in Collegio pronunciavit, huic adiunxi Apologiae: themata nimirum Theologica, aliasquè antiquas expositiones Latinè versas à R. Aschamo. Quas eò libentiùs collegi & adiunxi, quòd illae ipsae exercitationes mihi videntur aliquem sequi florem orationis, & magnam scribentis redolère pietatem.

Accipe igitur, (candide Lector) & eo animo accipe has Theologicas exercitationes, quo antea acceperis Latinas epistolas, & reliqua eiusdem pererudita opuscula. Et non laborem meum, qui in his colligendis & conservandis minimus fuit, respice: sed voluntatem meam, quae in te maxima est, & erit perpetuò paratissima, humanitèr amplectere. Vale.

TERENTIANUS MAURUS

Pro captu Lectoris habent sua fata libelli

witchcraft and frauds, not just one night, but the darkneses of many ages, not the home of just one man, but the governance of the whole world. It has deceived, bewitched and robbed not just common, simple and untrained men but also some of those that are powerful and shrewd. And what has it not (done)? For who was ever so rapacious a warrior, so tenacious a merchant, so wily a usurer, so greedy an old man, so strict an old woman, even if they have known full well how to despoil, deceive and rob other men, that the Mass did not despoil, deceive and rob all of them. And how is that? For the reason that there never existed any licence so prominent, any force of crimes so obvious which did not have secure and sure protection in the sanctity of the Mass. But why (do I say) more? Roger Ascham hounds sufficiently enough the follies, pretences, frauds, shadows and absurdities of this Mass,

and would have handled them at (even) greater length if he had completed this little discussion. You have what has been found and preserved; the rest which are missing must be mourned for rather than hoped for. He added to this Defence other exercises which he, partly for an exercise and partly from an obligation of office to dispute, either wrote in private in his bedroom or publicly delivered in College: these were indeed the *Themata Theologica* and other ancient expositions turned into Latin by Roger Ascham. These I drew together and added all the more gladly because those exercises themselves seem to me to follow some blossom of oratory and to diffuse¹⁵ the great piety of the writer.

Receive therefore, (well-disposed Reader), and receive these Theological exercises in the spirit in which you previously received his Latin letters and other very scholarly little works by the same man. And give thought not to my toil in collating and preserving these papers which was minimal, but kindly understand my goodwill which is, for you, so great and will, for the rest of time, be ever ready. Farewell.

Terentianus Maurus:¹⁶

According to the capabilities of the reader, books have their destiny.¹⁷

¹⁵ *redolere* = to emit/diffuse a scent, for example, of a flower and thus he continues the metaphor.

¹⁶ Terentianus Maurus is the name of a second century grammarian.

¹⁷ This phrase appears as verse 1286 in Terentianus Maurus's *De litteris, De syllabis, De Metris*.

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